

EVERYMAN, I will go with thee,

and be thy guide,

In thy most need to go by thy side

HOMER

The traditional epic poet of Greece, of whom no real records exist. Herodotus placed him as living in the ninth century B.C. and modern authorities incline to accept this date. Many towns claim the distinction of his birthplace, e.g. Smyrna, Chios, Argos, Athens and Salamis. Believed to have been blind.

Homer's Iliad

TRANSLATED BY

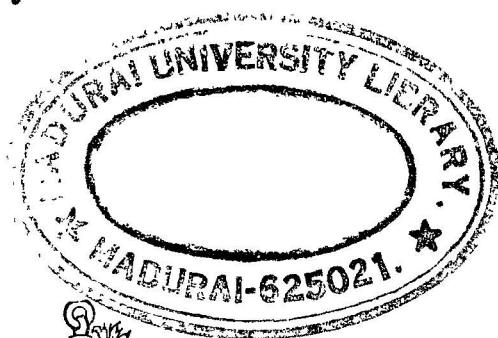
S. O. ANDREW AND M. J. OAKLEY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

JOHN WARRINGTON

PREFACE BY

M. J. OAKLEY



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INTRODUCTION

HOMER enjoyed among the ancients a reputation and an authority comparable with that of Confucius in China or with that of the Bible in Christian lands. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, indeed, have undergone treatment not unlike that of the Scriptural text: they have been the subject of endless commentary, the most varied interpretation, and not seldom of the most acrimonious dispute.

Concerning Homer we have little knowledge: he was a nebulous figure even in the ancient world. Seven cities¹ vied for the title of his birthplace; but the strongest claims were those of Chios and Smyrna, and the evidence of the poems themselves is slightly in favour of Ionian Smyrna. Certainly his home was by 'the wine-dark sea,' and his similes show a taste for and close observation of nature and the homely things of life. He may have belonged to the *demiurgoi*, a class of independent craftsmen which comprised many types of worker, including the professional bards. There is an ancient tradition that Homer was blind, and it is perhaps the best founded of the legends which grew around his name: for many bards in antiquity seem to have been afflicted with that outward darkness which often enlarges the eye of memory and imagination.

Homer's date has always been, and must remain, a matter of conjecture. According to Eratosthenes of Cyrene² he was contemporary with the main events which he relates, that is, in the twelfth century. But in the light of modern archaeological research this date is too early: the civilization described in the *Iliad* is clearly later than that of the Mycenaean age. Herodotus favours the ninth century. His view is adopted by most scholars to-day, although the opinion of Theopompus of Chios³ finds some support. Theopompus places Homer in the seventh century, contemporary with Archilochus.

Already in the sixth century B.C. the philosophers Zenophanes and Heraclitus condemned Homer upon moral grounds: they disapproved especially of the numerous examples of lust and other reprehensible conduct on the part of the Immortal Gods: two centuries later Plato was to make his famous attack⁴ on Homer and to bar all poets and poetry from his Commonwealth.⁵ Meanwhile, in the fifth century, Theagenes of Rhegium replied to these moral strictures with an allegorical interpretation of the epics. He maintained that the gods of Homer were not persons but rather symbols of the powers of nature or of human faculties. This view was upheld and developed (often in an extreme form) by such writers as the Epicurean Metrodorus of Lampsacus, Crates of

¹ 'Smyrna, Rhodus, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, Athenae.' This list, however, was not constant.

² c. 274-194 B.C. He succeeded Apollonius Rhodius as third head of the Alexandrian Library, c. 247 (POxy. 1241).

³ Fourth century B.C., author of *Hellenica*.

⁴ *Republic*, 377 D.

⁵ *Ibid.* 607, A.

Mallos,¹ Strabo, Dio Chrysostom, and the author of a *Life* of Homer doubtfully attributed to Plutarch. Against the allegorists Eratosthenes advanced the commonsense view that Homer's morality was quite irrelevant, since his purpose was to entertain, not to instruct: he was a poet, not a pedagogue.

The philological writings of Thrasyarchus, Gorgias, and other sophists of the late fifth and early fourth centuries had awakened an interest in poetry and artistic form as such; and a notoriously bitter critic of Homer in this respect was Zoilus of Amphipolis.² He took the bard to task for grammatical errors and for what he called faulty poetical invention. How, he demanded, could the companions of Odysseus be said to weep after their metamorphosis into swine? ³ Aristotle, however, in the *Poetics* condemns as absurd all such carping criticism. He accords Homer first place in 'the serious style of poetry,' and points to his sublimity of thought and vividness of speech, to his creative art which makes alive his characters while concealing their creator, and to the perfect unity of his plots.

The text of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we now have it depends mainly upon two codices at Venice, one dating from the tenth, the other from the eleventh century A.D.; and it is certain that this text is not exactly as the author left it. The poems were intended for recitation rather than for private reading, and their integrity for long depended upon the necessarily unreliable medium of oral transmission. We do not know at what date they were first written down; but according to ancient tradition an authoritative version was prepared in the sixth century at Athens under the tyrant Pisistratus, and the text from which the Venetian codices are ultimately derived certainly existed in the time of Plato. At any rate, it was inevitable that in passing from mouth to mouth, and, later, through the hands of successive scribes, errors and interpolations would find their way into the text. The alteration of a word might change the sense of a whole passage; local recitations might introduce short lays from other sources in praise of a lord's reputed ancestor; and the original mixture of Aeolic and Ionic dialect, in which the epics appear to have been composed, was undoubtedly corrupted in the course of time by the substitution of Attic forms.

It is with the Alexandrian scholars of the third century B.C. that a serious study of the Homeric text begins. Working upon material in the Library,⁴ they endeavoured, by collating all the manuscripts at their disposal, first to remove the interpolations (a process known as recension) and then to emend the errors by supplying their own conjectural readings. This system of recension and emendation has been continued more or less extensively by scholars ever since. The first of the Alexandrian editors was Zenodotus.⁵ Besides an important recension, he produced an Homeric *Glossary*, the precursor

¹ Head of the library at Pergamum, second century B.C.

² Fourth century B.C., author of a work *Against Homer* and nicknamed 'Homeromastix.'

³ *Odyssey*, x.

⁴ Founded by Ptolemy I, c. 284 and enlarged by his successor Philadelphus.

⁵ First head of the library.

of all scientific study of language. Aristophanes of Byzantium¹ made a yet more scholarly recension: he was the first to maintain that the original text of the *Odyssey* ended at xxiii, 296. His successor, Aristarchus, was the greatest of all the ancient Homeric scholars: he was the author of some important critical notes and commentaries; and it is to him that we owe the division of the two poems into twenty-four books each. No complete work of the Alexandrians has survived: our knowledge of their opinions rests largely upon the *scholia* to the Venetian codices, and these *scholia*, in turn, are derived from an epitome of Didymus.²

Towards the end of the eighteenth century a long dormant interest in Homer was reawakened by the publication of Wood's *Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer* (1769) and by Villoison's edition in 1788 of the Venetian *scholia*. In 1795 there appeared a now celebrated work, Friedrich Wolf's *Prolegomena in Homerum*. With a few unimportant exceptions, the ancients had implicitly believed that one poet, Homer, was sole author of the two epics, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Wolf now put forward a theory that each of the poems was simply a collection of lays which had been gradually blended and given a semblance of unity in the course of their transmission. His view was favourably received, and has since been developed by a long line of famous scholars. This belief in a multiple origin of the epics rests upon two main arguments: the supposed impossibility for a single person to have composed works of such length without the aid of writing, and the presence of undeniable repetitions and inconsistencies.

Whatever date we assign to Homer we cannot say for certain that he had not the aid of writing; for that art is known to have been practised as early as 2000 B.C. in Crete and very much earlier elsewhere. The results, moreover, of investigation into the powers of trained memory show the composition of the longest works to be within the limits of possibility. The importance of repetition and inconsistency is lessened when we recall that these poems, like all man's work, are the fruit of fallible intelligence; that they were rarely, except at the Athenian Panathenaic festival, recited in their entirety; and that therefore their hearers would have been as little able to discern such flaws as the author would have been to eliminate them with the unaided function of memory. Repetition and inconsistency demonstrate no more than that the poet used his sources with a degree of critical acumen unworthy of the best modern scholarship. To-day, therefore, there is a strong tendency to lay more stress upon those characteristics of the poems which suggest a unity of authorship. In each there is a central figure around whom is formed a closely woven plot and over whom hovers the anger or the favour of a god. In each not only the principal heroes, but even the minor characters, are consistent. In each there is a marked similarity of language throughout, and the recurrent evidence of an individual taste.

¹ Successor of Eratosthenes as librarian.

² Didymus (c. 65 B.C.—A.D. 10), surnamed 'Chalkenteros' (Brazen-Guts) on account of his vast industry and erudition. He was author of a commentary which incorporated the notes of Zenodotus, Aristophanes, and Aristarchus.

The second part of the Homeric problem turns upon the question whether one author was responsible for both epics. Many authorities have held that, even granted the essential unity of each, the poet of the *Odyssey* was other than the composer of the *Iliad*. The most serious arguments brought forward in support of this theory are drawn from the notable differences of style and thought; but in spite of these very real difficulties, scholars are returning to the old faith in one author of both works. Pseudo-Longinus may give us a clue to the truth when he remarks that Homer began to fail in the later poem: the objections, indeed, lose force in the light of the bard's advancing years. For altered ideas of life, a new conception of the communion of earth with heaven, are characteristic of Everyman's experience as he draws nearer to the final darkness. There is a link between the poems: the *Odyssey* seems to have been intended as a sequel to the doom of Troy, and the old figures are seen with their old natures. Both stories, though so different, are told with a fundamentally similar technique, in language that has been likened to a whirlwind or the thunder of waves upon a lonely shore.

What of Homer's sources? They were, no doubt, folk tales, some dating back maybe to Crete and some maybe beyond. They probably had the form of shorter lays improvised by the bards of a culture of which Homer must be considered the perfect flower. He took them, fused them, and quite transformed them by his unique genius and single inspiration. It is the test of great literature that it shall be found to have endured: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* remain after thirty centuries among the unequalled achievements of the human race. Engraved not alone upon papyrus but in the hearts of men, they have survived the cataclysms of time; they march with the irresistible phalanx of the years.

JOHN WARRINGTON.

The first printed edition of Homer was prepared in Italy by Chalcondylas and appeared in 1488. Since then numerous editions have been produced by eminent scholars. The best are those by T. W. Allen: *Iliad*, 1931; *Odyssey*, 1906. The first English translation was that of George Chapman: *Iliad* 1611; *Odyssey*, 1614-15. Alexander Pope published his *Iliad*, 1715-20; *Odyssey*, 1725-6. William Cowper's translation of both epics appeared in 1791, and strikingly similar is the *Iliad* by George Edward Stanley, 14th earl of Derby, 1864. Of the prose versions the best known are: A. Lang, W. Leaf, and E. J. Myers: *Iliad*, 1883; S. H. Butcher and A. Lang: *Odyssey*, 1879.

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TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

THE version of the *Iliad* which appears here is the combined work of two translators. It is, however, in no sense the result of collaboration, for neither of the translators ever met the other or corresponded with him. The version here given to the public as a single production was begun in the first place by the late S. O. Andrew, who in 1938 brought out a translation of those Books of the *Iliad* which trace the story of Achilles—Books 1, 11, and 16–24. This selection, which appeared under the title *The Wrath of Achilles*, was accompanied by an appreciative preface from the pen of the late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, who, speaking of the pleasure which he, 'as an old worshipper of Homer,' had experienced in reading it, expressed the hope that Andrew would live—as did Chapman—to publish the whole translation of 'this miraculous poem.' Meanwhile, Andrew, who had made a rough first version of the remaining Books of the *Iliad*, set the project aside for the time being and brought out a translation of the whole of the *Odyssey*, in the same metre which he had so successfully adopted for *The Wrath of Achilles*. A few years later he was approached by the publishers with the request that he would complete his version of the *Iliad* by translating the Books which had been omitted in his previous selection from the great epic. However, the disabilities of old age and increasing ill health compelled Andrew to decline the task and the completion of the work was, with his approval, put in my hands. My task was facilitated to a great extent by the unexpected discovery, only a few months before his long life drew to its close, of a considerable amount of his original rough draft, which was presumed not to have survived a dispersal of his papers resulting from enemy bombardment during the late war.

Of the 24 Books which comprise the *Iliad*, the translation of Books 1, 11, and 16–24 was the work of Andrew alone, while that of Books 3, 6, 13, 14, and 15 (all but a fragment of the last-named) is the fruit of my own labours. As for the remainder of the Books, the translation is based in the main on Andrew's pencilled draft, subject to my own emendations, revisions, and additions, though here and there are passages for which I am alone responsible, owing to there being lacunae in Andrew's original draft. I have endeavoured to follow my predecessor's methods and style with sufficient care to ensure that the reader will not be conscious of the dual authorship.

Every age has its own ideas about the presentation of the classics to contemporary readers. Every translator is faced with a variety of problems which he must solve in his own way. There is first of all the problem of fidelity to the original. To some translators, strange as it may seem, this would appear a point of little importance.

Pope, for instance, despite assertions to the contrary in his apology for his translation, did not scruple to omit in his version words, phrases, and even whole lines which, with his eighteenth-century prejudices and refined notions of what was poetic diction, he deemed 'low' and therefore inadmissible in poetry. In the present version every effort has been made, subject to the very modest exigencies of the metre chosen and having regard for the differences of idiom between the two languages, to give a literal rendering of the Greek.

Another point which the translator must settle to his own satisfaction is the question of diction and vocabulary. Some translators, encouraged by the simplicity and the direct forcefulness of Homer's language, and seeing a certain analogy between his work and the early English ballads, have endeavoured to clothe their English translation with the rough graces and unstudied beauties of the ballad style. There is, however, a world of difference between the two, and a translation along these lines becomes unbearably monotonous when it has to render the long vicissitudes of the epic of *Ilios*. Such a translation is that of Francis Newman, written in a kind of Common Metre which is far from the majestic onrush of the Homeric paragraph. An example will show how far such a translation fails:

Then lord Apollo, son of Jove, to him in turn did answer:
'Come, hero! eke do thou then pray to gods of birth eternal.'

On the other hand, to lay the *Iliad*, as Pope and other translators have done, on the Procrustean bed of one's own ideas of elegant language, lopping off anything that one considers out of place in poetry, is to take the reader far away from that primitive, heroic world which we enter when we take up the *Iliad*, a world of gods and great men, where money is unknown and the art of writing yet to be discovered.

One factor against which the translator is powerless to defend himself is the fluidity and fickleness of the language which is the material of his art. We cannot read the noble version of the *Iliad* by Chapman, whom Keats heard 'speak out loud and bold,' without being distracted by the Elizabethan quaintness of the style—a quaintness which has accrued to it only from the changes which the English tongue has undergone in the last three hundred and fifty years. What was, to those who first read it, the language of everyday life, we now find odd and alien to our own modes of expression. Later readers of any literary work are always at a disadvantage in comparison with those who are contemporary with its publication. They cannot see it in the same light; the passage of years and those vicissitudes of elevation and abasement which may overtake the commonest of words (alas for the 'ruddy' and 'blooming' of so many romantic poems of the last century!) have altered and sometimes distorted the literary form of the work so that it no longer expresses for readers of a later time the original meaning of its author. This is one good reason why the classics need to be retranslated every so often. It is not, however, necessary or indeed desirable to load every rift of one's translation with the ore of the latest colloquialism—at least, in the case of a work with

the literary dignity of the *Iliad*; such is the fluidity of language, especially at the present time, that the translation would speedily become outmoded and even grotesque. As I see it, the translator of Homer must endeavour to steer between the Scylla of modern banality and the Charybdis of Translator's English, an extraordinary tongue written with deadly ease by men whose scholarship has been greater than their knowledge of true English idiom. This strange jargon is quite averse from the majestic simplicity of the Homeric line, but delights in endless and unnecessary inversions, a knotted and complicated syntax which defies analysis, and in a vocabulary which has swallowed, undigested, a thousand outcasts from common speech which have never lived outside the covers of a dictionary. Most people to-day will admit that the language of poetry should differ from that of common life by a certain heightening of the vocabulary, a certain discipline of the form, not deliberately adopted as an artificial enhancement, but unconsciously imposed as befitting the utterance of man's inmost being, the expression of his real self. Those who deny this belie only too clearly by their own verses their presumptuous claim to have scaled Mount Helicon; their style and vocabulary are those of a shopping-list—and have as much power to move the soul as great poetry should. Poetry in a foreign tongue, to my mind, is best translated in a poetic form and language corresponding, as far as this is possible, to the form and language of the original. In the translation of the *Iliad* here presented we have endeavoured to remove the language a few degrees from that of everyday life by the introduction of a few unobtrusive archaisms, a temperate use of inversion, and something of the formal dignity which gives the original so much of its stately beauty.

Perhaps the greatest problem of all is that of the metre in which the translation is to be written. It is a question which has often been discussed, and translators of great eminence and authority have spoken for or against the use of one or other of the common English metres. A number of people, recognizing the necessity for employing a metre which shall approximate, as far as that is possible, to that of the original, have urged the claims of the accentual hexameter, as used, for example, in Longfellow's *Evangeline*. They do not seem to have realized, however, that the Homeric hexameter is so named from the number which governs its quantity, not that which governs the number of stresses to a line. These are variable, and though sometimes they are six, more often they are found to be five or even less. It follows that an English translation in accentual hexameters, if it is to run *pari passu* with the original—a desideratum, I think, though not one to be pursued to the point of superstition—must necessarily be padded out to meet the requirements of what is in fact a wider metrical frame. No good translation should have to suffer this unnatural distention, a fact which should dissuade one from the use of accentual hexameters in translation.

Some would advance the claims of quantitative hexameters as used, for example, by Robert Bridges to turn chosen passages of the *Aeneid*. There are several valid objections to this. There is first of all the technical difficulty of writing in a metre based on an alien prosody. 'Hard, hard, hard is it only not to tumble,' said Tennyson,

in an attempt to write English hendecasyllables, a metre which I consider approximates far more closely to blank verse rhythm than does the hexameter; these difficulties, serious enough in original composition, become ten times greater when it is a question of translation. I do not wish here to decry the use of classical metres in English poetry, but it does seem to me that most of those who have attempted verse in such metres have clung rather too grimly to the rules of Greek and Latin prosody, without considering the elements in those languages which went to the making of those rules. It may well be that English verse will be enriched by strains of unfamiliar beauty by a poet who shall learn to interpret the ancient prosodies in the rhythms of his mother tongue, as Horace did so successfully with the lyric measures of Greece.

The most obvious metre of all to use is, of course, blank verse. It has a sustained, paragraphic rhythm corresponding to that of the hexameter, it can keep close pace with the Greek, and has in actual fact been employed by several translators, notably Lord Derby, in rendering the Greek of the *Iliad*. Skilfully handled, it is capable of infinite variations, and those who urge its use adduce in its favour the fact that it was so often the chosen metre of Shakespeare, Milton, and Tennyson, three of our great national poets. It was this very fact which seemed to Andrew a cogent argument against using it to translate Homer. 'Since it has many characteristic forms,' he said, 'and each form is attached to some particular name, in whatever form it is used by the translator, the reader is compelled by the power of association to think of Homer as another Milton or Shelley or whoever it may be.' He quoted in support of his assertion the words of Bridges on the same subject: 'If an English reader, who is unable to read Greek, is to get a glimpse of what Homer is like, he must read something which does not remind him of Milton or Pope or Tennyson or Swinburne, because Homer does not do that. A reader of Homer is like a man in a dream, who enters into a world of strange beauty unlike that which every day besets him; he is far removed from the associations of modern art and civilization, and unless he is enthralled in that dramatic charm, he has not entered within the magic circle.'

The metre in which Andrew finally elected to write his translation is one admirably adapted for the purpose. In its typical form it consists of five stresses to the line, separated from each other by one or two unstressed syllables:

Zeus and myself and Hades, the lord of the dead.

It may have two unstressed syllables at the beginning and one at the end:

Not a man could shew Menelaus, beloved of Ares.

The stress in a foot may be inverted. Thus:

And of sweet music they tire, and the charm of the dance.

This metre is capable of remarkable flexibility and variety, qualities which enable the translator to reproduce the Greek closely; he can steer along the course of Homer's impetuous stream without grounding on the snags of metrical exigencies. The verdict on the effect of the metre must be left to the reader to pronounce. Perhaps he

will echo the words of Quiller-Couch: 'We have not yet discovered in English—probably never shall discover—a metre to convey the *spoudaiotes*, the combined majesty and rush as of a wind I have hinted at. But I believe Andrew has hit on the nearest.'

A few words may be said in conclusion about certain characteristics of the Homeric style which inevitably strike those who come upon them for the first time. Perhaps the most outstanding of these is the poet's use of epithets. These have often no special significance in their own context but are applied as a kind of fixed or regular adornment of certain words, and that often from reasons of metrical convenience. Thus, we come time and again on such expressions as 'the hollow ships,' 'the wine-dark sea,' 'the loud-resounding sea,' and the like. These epithets may also be applied to persons: 'Odysseus of many devices,' 'bright-plum'd Hector,' 'white-arm'd Hera,' 'goodly Achilles,' and many others of a similar kind. In a sense they are often less adjectival than titular, and epithets indicative of moral goodness and worth can be applied to a character even when he is depicted as acting wrongly. This convention of Greek epic poetry was later to find an echo in the 'pius Aeneas' of Virgil.

Another notable trait of the Homeric style is the frequent recurrence of single lines conveying the information that one character is speaking to another. Time and again we have such lines as:

And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address.

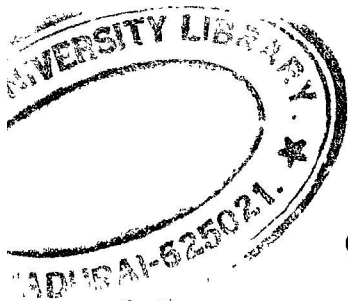
Then bright-plum'd Hector spake in answer to her.

These introductory lines are used even when the speech they introduce consists of but a single line. We may think of them, if we like, as stage-directions thrown into metrical form, warning the listener that some other member of the *dramatis personae* was about to speak. The art of Homer made its appeal to the ear and not to the eye, and it was necessary to ensure that the audience knew in whose mouth each of the speeches was supposed to be put. These lines, which would seem to have had some such utilitarian origin, acquire in reading a kind of formal dignity and rightness almost liturgical in its effect.

Finally, we may note the way in which whole lines and even passages of some length are repeated at a later stage in the poem, nearly always with the idea of emphasizing their content and impressing their importance on the mind of the listener. Thus, in Book 3, the suggestion of Paris that he and Menelaus should fight in single combat is repeated by Hector when addressing the two armies. Again, in Book 2, the instructions given by Zeus to the false Dream are repeated word for word by Agamemnon when recounting the matter of the Dream to the Greek assembly. By such echoes and reminiscences the poem is knit together in the mind of the listener, and as a fresh stage in the epic struggle supervenes he is reminded by them of earlier happenings in the long duel fought out beneath the walls of Troy.

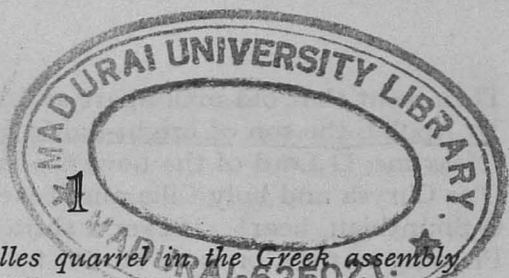
M. J. OAKLEY.

1954.



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Agamemnon and Achilles quarrel in the Greek assembly before Troy, and Achilles, thinking himself wronged, withdraws from fighting and obtains from Zeus a promise to give victory to Troy until Agamemnon rues the wrong.

SING, Goddess, the wrath of Achilles Pelēides,
The ruinous anger that woes on the Danaans brought
Unnumber'd, and strong souls many of heroes sent
To Hades, and made their bodies a prey for the dogs,
A feast for the birds, while the purpose of Zeus was fulfill'd
Ev'n from the hour when the two first parted in strife,
Atrides, the King of men, and noble Achilles.

Say then, who of the Gods embroil'd them in strife?
'Twas the son of Leda and Zeus, who, wroth with the King,
A deadly pestilence wreak'd on the Danaan host
Because Agamemnon honour'd not Chryses the priest
That day when he came to the camp by the swift-going ships
To ransom his daughter, bringing a measureless price;
For he bore in his hand the suppliant wreath of the God
On a golden staff, and all the Achaeans besought
But chiefly the two Atridae that marshall'd the host:
'Twin sons of Atreus, and all ye Achaeans in arms,
Now may the gods of Olympus grant you to sack
Troy's city and send you a happy homeward return
If only my child ye release and the ransom accept
Revering the Far-shooter Phoebus, the own son of Zeus.'
Then all the other Achaeans shouted assent
To honour the priest and the splendid ransom accept;
Only to King Agamemnon seem'd it not good,
Who drove him away and stern charge laid upon him:
'Old man, let me not light on thee here at the ships
Either tarrying now or returning hither again,
Lest Apollo's chaplet and staff advantage thee not.
Chryseïs I will not release; ere then shall the maid
Grow old in our palace in Argos, far from her home,
A slave at the loom and my leman, serving my bed.
Begone! and provoke me no more, that in peace thou mayst go.'

So spake Agamemnon, and Chryses fearing obey'd
And silent return'd by the strand of the loud-breaking sea;

Then went that old man apart and, lifting his voice,
To Apollo, the son of bright-hair'd Leda, he pray'd:
'Hear me, O Lord of the bow, that rulest with power
O'er Chrysa and holy Cilla and Tenedos' isle,
O Sminthian, hear! If ever a shrine I have deck'd
Pleasing to thee, or have burn'd fat thigh-bones for thee
Of bulls and of goats, fulfil thou this my desire:
Avenge with thy arrows my tears on the Danaan host.'
So spake he praying, and Phoebus his suppliant heard,
And down from the peaks of Olympus, angry at heart,
Bearing his quiver and bow on his shoulders, he came,
And the arrows rattled and clash'd on Apollo's shoulders
When he mov'd in his anger; and like the nightfall he came.
Then, sitting aloof from the camp, a shaft he let fly,
And dreadfully clang'd the silver bow of the God:
First the mules and the fleet-footed dogs he assail'd
But soon on the men a hail of arrows he loos'd,
And ever the funeral fires burn'd thick on the plain.

Nine days long did his arrows range through the camp;
On the tenth Pelides call'd the assembly to meet,
For white-arm'd Hera had put the thought in his mind
Pitying the Danaan host when she saw that they died.
And soon as the folk in full assembly were met,
Then, rising, swift-foot Achilles address'd them and spake:
'Methinks, O King, that an irresistible tide,
Tho' death we escape, will sweep us back to our homes
If plague and battle alike must ravage us here.
Hark now my counsel: some seer or priest let us call
Or diviner of dreams (for the dream is also from Zeus)
Who may tell us why Phoebus Apollo is angry with us,
Whether for vow unpaid or for hecatomb miss'd,
If haply, smelling the savour of rams and of goats,
His wrath he may stay and the pestilence from us avert?'

So spake he and sate him down, and among them arose
Calchas the son of Thestor, a prince of diviners,
Who knew both present and future as well as the past
And had guided the Danaan vessels to Ilion's strand
By his soothsaying craft, the gift of Apollo to him;
He now with kindly intent harangued them and said:
'Achilles, darling of Zeus, thou biddest me tell
What means the wrath of my Lord, the far-shooting God;
I will speak my mind if thou covenant with me and swear
With all thy heart to help me in word and in deed,
For methinks I shall anger a man that in Argos has power

High over all, and whom the Achaeans obey.
Too strong is a prince for a meaner man to provoke;
He may swallow his wrath for the day, but still will he keep
Resentment warm in his breast, to vent it again
Full measure at last. Think well: dost thou pledge me thy
help?'

And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Courage, O soothsayer! speak the oracular word;
I swear by thy Lord Apollo, to whom thou dost pray
Whenever the mind of the God thou revealest to us,
That none, while I live and behold the light upon earth,
On thee at the ships shall lay a violent hand
Of all the princes, not King Agamemnon himself
Who boasts him of all the Achaeans the greatest by far.'
Then, taking courage, the blameless soothsayer spake:
"Tis neither for vow unpaid nor for hecatomb miss'd
But for his priest's sake, whom King Agamemnon has spurn'd
Refusing his daughter's release and the ransom he brought,
That the God has sent us this trouble; and more will he send,
For never the loathsome pestilence will he remove
Till we yield the round-cheek'd maid to her father again
Unbought, unransom'd, and carry a hecatomb meet
To Chrysa, and so to our prayers propitiate Him.'

So spake he and down he sate, and among them arose
The hero Atrides, King Agamemnon himself,
Sore displeas'd, and his heart-blood swell'd in his veins
To a livid rage and as blazing fire were his eyes;
And, looking mischief, on Calchas first did he turn:
'Ill prophet, that never dost speak things pleasant to me,
'Tis ever the joy of thy heart to prophesy ill,
For good thou never hast spoken nor brought it to pass
And now, the soothsayer still, thou haranguest the host
Saying that the far-shooting God this trouble has sent
Because for the maid Chryseïs I would not accept
The goodly ransom; for fainer the girl would I keep
Preferring her even to Clytemnestra herself,
The wife of my youth, whose equal surely she is
In feature and form, in wit and the skill of her hands.
Yet even so will I yield her, if better it be;
I had rather my people should live than sicken and die
But prepare ye a recompense meet, lest I be alone
Of all the Achaeans dispriz'd—unseemly were that
Since before all eyes my guerdon is taken away.'

And swift-foot godlike Achilles answer'd and said:

'Most noble Atrides, tell us, thou covetous King,
How shall the great-hearted Danaans recompense thee?
No public treasure or store of riches have we,
But all we have taken by spoil has been openly shar'd
And it little beseems from the many to ask it again.
Yield thou the girl to the God, and hereafter will we
Threefold and fourfold repay thee if Zeus of his grace
But grant us some well-wall'd city in Troyland to sack.'
And him did King Agamemnon in answer address:
'Not in this wise, godlike Achilles, strong as thou art,
Think to o'erreach me, for thus thou shalt not prevail;
Thou bidd'st me forsooth, that thou thy guerdon mayst keep,
Sit tamely bereft of my own, when the damsel I yield.
Nay, if the great-hearted Danaans grant me a prize
That is pleasing to me, and the recompense equal shall make,
'Tis well!—but if not, some other his guerdon must yield,
Thou or Odysseus or Ajax; myself I will go
To take her, and whomso I visit, wroth shall he be.
But of all this debate we hereafter again;
Now, O princes, a ship let us launch on the deep
And take pick'd oarsmen to man her, and in her embark
A hecatomb meet and the fair-cheek'd damsel herself,
Chryseïs, and one of our counsellors captain shall be,
Ajax or Idomeneus or godlike Odysseus
Or thou thyself, O Achilles, redoubtable man,
And sacrifice make to the God to propitiate him!'

Then, louting upon him, swift-foot Achilles replied:
'Out on thee, treacherous fox, in shamelessness cloth'd!
How can any thy bidding obey with a will
To go on a journey or battle amain with the foe?
No quarrel of mine has brought me hither to fight
With the Trojan spearmen, seeing they have wrong'd me in
naught;

Never yet did they harry my horses or kine
Or waste my harvest in deep-soil'd Phthia my home,
Nurse-mother of heroes, for stretch'd between us there lie
Leagues of shadowy mountain and loud-vex'd sea.
But thee have we follow'd hither, thy pleasure to do
And vengeance to win for King Menelaus and thee;
All which thou regardest not now, but with eye unasham'd
Look'st on my guerdon of honour, to filch it away,
The Danaans' gift, too hardly won by my toil.
No equal portion have I when the sons of Achaea
Sack some populous town on the Ilian plain:

Here as ever the brunt of furious war
My hands must bear, but when comes the division of spoil
Thou hast the ampler reward and leavest to me,
Spent with the battle, some little thing—but mine own.
Back will I go to Phthia, since better it is
To return with my high-beak'd ships; I am minded no more
Unhonour'd to draw from the fount of riches for thee.'
And the King of men, Agamemnon, answering spake:
'Yea fly, if flight is thy will; no word will I say
To bid thee tarry, since others I have at my side
To honour me still, wise-counselling Zeus above all.
Most hateful art thou of the princes foster'd of Zeus
Since ever thou lovest contention and fighting and war;
Strong thou mayst be, yet strength is the gift of a God:
Get thee home with thy ships and thy comrades-in-arms
And among thy Myrmidons lord it, but as for myself
I reck not a whit of thy anger: and mark me in this—
Since Phoebus Apollo takes Chrysëis away,
With my own ship and company home will I send her
And then will go to thy hut for the damsel thy prize
And myself will bring her away, that so thou mayst know
How far I am greater than thou, and another may fear
In my presence to match me and make himself equal with me.'

He spake, and Achilles griev'd, and the thought of his mind
In his shaggy breast was divided this way and that,
Whether to draw the sharp-edg'd sword at his thigh

And raise the assembly and slay Agamemnon the King,
Or curb his vehement heart and his anger assuage:
And while yet he debated thereof in his wavering breast
And his sword half-drew in its sheath, Athena from heaven
Came down, whom the Goddess white-arm'd Hera had sent,
For she car'd for those heroes both and lov'd them alike.
And, standing behind him, she pluck'd at a lock of his hair.
Seen by Achilles alone, unseen of the rest,

And Achilles marvell'd and turn'd, and straightway he knew
Pallas Athena's shining terrible eyes

And, uttering his voice, in winged words to her spake:
'Why, child of the Aegis-bearer, why art thou come?
Is it to see Agamemnon's insolent pride?

Yea, I will tell thee what surely accomplish'd shall be
That his own presumptuousness will lose him his life.'

And the grey-eyed Goddess Athena address'd him again:

'I am come to restrain thy fury; hearken to me,
For from heav'n am I come, whom white-arm'd Hera has sent

Loving you both in her heart and caring for you,
Leave contention, and draw not the sword with thy hand,
But reproach him only to tell him how it shall be;
For this will I say, and it surely accomplish'd shall be,
That a thrice more splendid gift shall hereafter be thine
To repay thee this insult. Forbear then, and take thou my
word.'

And her did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Needs must a man, O Goddess, tho' vex'd in his heart,
The saying uphold of you twain, for so it is best:
Who the Gods obeys, himself they will presently hear.'
His heavy hand on the silver pommel he stay'd
And drove it back to the scabbard, nor fail'd to obey
The word of Athena; but she to Olympus was gone
And sought in the palace of Zeus the Immortals her peers.

But Achilles again with bitter words of abuse
Address'd Atrides, and nowise ceas'd from his wrath:
'Wine-sodden, with eyes of a dog and heart of a deer,
Ever has courage fail'd thee to arm with thy folk
For general battle or in close-set ambush to lie
With the Argive princes; that were destruction for thee!
'Tis better forsooth the prize of another to filch
In the Danaan host, when he speaks his mind to thy face.
A folk-devourer thou art, and of nithings the King!
Else were this outrage, O son of Atreus, thy last.
Now this will I say, and a mighty oath will I swear:
By the staff in my hands that with leaf nor twig any more
Can sprout, since once it has left its trunk on the hills,
Nor ever again grow green, being shorn by the axe
Of leafage and bark, and it now is a staff for the hands
Of the sons of Achaea that judge and the dooms uphold
In the eyes of Zeus (no mightier oath can there be),
Verily longing on all the Achaeans shall come
For Achilles, and thou no more wilt be able to save
Thy people, for all thy grief, when multitudes fall
By man-slaying Hector, and then thy heart thou wilt rend
With rage that thou honouredst not the best of thy peers.'
So spake Pelëides and flung to the ground
The gold-studded staff and anon return'd to his seat,
While Atrides, opposite, lour'd. Then rose in their midst
The clear-voic'd Pylian spokesman, eloquent-tongued,
Nestor, whose lips dropp'd discourse sweeter than honey;
Two generations already had pass'd from his sight
Of the men that aforetime were born and nurtur'd with him

In goodly Pylos, and over the third he was King,
Who now with kindly intent harangued them and said:
'Alack, sore trouble indeed on Achaea is come!

Verily Priam and Priam's sons would be glad

And all the Trojans would greatly rejoice in their hearts
If they heard this tale of the strife that has parted you twain,
The chiefest in counsel among us and chiefest in fight.

Nay, listen to me, for ye both are younger than I;
With many ere now have I mix'd and converse have held
That were better than ye, and they made not light of my
words,

For never beheld I such heroes nor yet shall behold
As Pirithöus and Dryas shepherd of men

And Caeneus and great Polyphemos and Exadius

And Theseus the son of Aegeus, a peer of the Gods:

Mightiest were these of all men born upon earth,
Mightiest they were, and against the mightiest fought,
The wild Beast-men of the mountains, and quelled them and
slew.

Converse I held with them all when from Pylos I came,
Pelops' island afar, for they summon'd me thence
And I fought at their side, their equal; but none of the men
Such as now are on earth could ever have battled with these,
And they took my counsel to heart and listen'd to me.

Listen ye also, ye two, for so it is best:

Do thou, tho' royal, not take the damsel away

But leave her as first the Achaeans gave her to him,

Nor do thou, Pelides, think to strive with a king

Force against force, for no common honour befalls

A sceptred king to whom Zeus the glory has given;

Strong tho' thou be and born of a mother divine,

Yet he is the greater because he is king over more.

And thou, O Atrides, curb thy fury; 'tis I

That beg thee forgo thy anger 'gainst noble Achilles,

To all the Achaeans a mighty bulwark of war.'

And him did King Agamemnon in answer address:

'E'en so, old sage, the truth thou hast spoken aright,

But here is a man that would stand all others above,

Aspiring to lord it o'er all and be King among all

And commander of all: there is one that will not submit.

Ev'n if the Gods immortal a warrior made him,

What reason in that for his storms of scurrilous words?'

Whereat brake in the noble Achilles again:

'Truly a man of naught and a coward were I

To humble myself and bow to all that thou sayst;
To others give thy commands and seek not o'er me
The master to play: methinks that I shall not submit.
One word more will I speak, do thou lay it to heart;
Force against force for the damsel I never will fight
With thee or another—ye gave and have taken away;
But all else that is mine by my swift black ship,
Of that shalt thou naught lay hand on to take it by force.
Go to, make trial thereof, that all may behold;
That instant thy crimson blood my spear shall imbrue.'

So they, having fought their battle of violent words,
Stood up and dismiss'd the assembly in front of the ships,
And Peleus' son return'd to his hut by the ships
And Patroclus and others his comrades accompanied him.
But Atrides a speedy vessel launch'd on the sea,
And twenty oarsmen he chose and the hecatomb shipp'd,
And, bringing the fair Chrysëis, he set her aboard;
And Odysseus of many devices captain'd the ship
And, when all were embark'd, they sail'd the watery ways.
But Atrides order'd the people to purify them,
And they bathed themselves and the scourings cast in the sea
And then to Apollo sacrific'd hecatombs meet
Of bulls and of goats beside the unharvested sea,
And the savour in eddies of smoke ascended to heaven.

Thus were they busy through all the host, but the King
Ceas'd not the feud wherewith he had threaten'd Achilles,
But anon Talthylbius call'd he and Eurybates,
His trusty heralds and squires, and a word to them spake:
'Go ye two to the hut of Pelëides

✓ And take by the hand Brisëis and bring her to me;
If he yield her not, I will come and take her myself
With more at my back, and that shall be harder for him.'
So saying he sped them and stern charge laid upon them,
And they strode unwilling along the unharvested sea
And came to the ships and the huts of the Myrmidon men,
And Achilles beside his hut and his vessel they found
Sitting, and little rejoic'd he their faces to see.

✱ But the heralds, stricken with dread, yet in awe of the King,
Halted and no word utter'd nor question ask'd,
But Achilles knew in his heart and address'd them and said:
'Hail to you, heralds, the voice of Zeus and of men,
Approach ye nearer; not yours is the fault but the King's
Who has sent you hither to fetch Briseis the fair.
Go thou, Patroclus, and bring the damsel without

That the heralds may lead her away, and themselves shall be witness

In the sight of the blessed Gods and of mortal men
And of him, that hard-hearted King, when hereafter shall come
Need of Achilles to save from dishonour and death
Those others. For truly with ruinous frenzy he raves
Not looking before and after in blindness of heart
That so his Achaeans in safety should fight at the ships.'

He spake, and Patroclus his well-lov'd comrade obey'd,
And forth from the hut the fair Brisëis he brought
And gave to the heralds, and back they went by the shore
And the maid unwilling beside them. But noble Achilles
Sat by the grey sea's edge and wept to himself
Aloof from his friends, and gaz'd o'er the measureless main
And, with hands outstretch'd, to his mother instantly pray'd:
'Mother, since but for a span thou didst bear me to live,
Honour at least the Olympian ought to have giv'n,
Great Zeus that thunders on high, yet he honours me not,
For the high King, even Atrides, has done me despite
Who has taken my prize Brisëis and holds her himself.'

So spake he and wept and at once by his mother was heard
Where she sat by the Ancient's side in the depths of the sea,
And straightway she rose from the hoar-grey sea like a mist
And before the face of her son, where he wept on the sand,
Sate her and, stroking him, spake and call'd him by name:
'Why weepest thou, child, what sorrow is this that has come?
Hide thou it not but speak, that I also may know.'

And heavily moaning, swift-foot Achilles replied:
'Thou knowest; why tell it to thee, all-knowing that art?
To Theba, Ætion's holy city, we went
And put it to sack and carried the spoil to the ships,
And the sons of Achaea fairly divided it all
And set for Atrides the maid Chrysëis apart,
But Chryses, the priest of Apollo the far-shooting God,
Came to the ships of the bronze-coated Danaan host
To ransom his daughter, bringing a measureless price,
And bore in his hand the suppliant wreath of the God
On a golden staff, and all the Achaeans besought
But chiefly the two Atridae that marshal the host:
Then all the other Achaeans shouted assent
To honour the priest and the splendid ransom accept,
Only to King Agamemnon seem'd it not good
Who drove him away and stern charge laid upon him.
And the old man angry return'd, and Apollo his prayer

Heard, for exceeding dear was Chryses to him,
 And aim'd at the host his destroying arrow, and they
 Began to perish in heaps when the shafts of the God
 Ranged through the camp of the Argives on every side.
 But the soothsayer, Calchas, Apollo's oracle spake,
 And I was the first to bid them propitiate him,
 But anger seiz'd on Atrides and straightway he rose
 And utter'd a threatening word which now is fulfill'd:
 They have sent Chrysëis away on a swift-going ship
 To Chrysa's strand, and have taken gifts for the God,
 And the other the heralds but now have fetch'd from my hut,
 E'en Briseus' daughter, the prize that the Danaans gave.
 Thou therefore protect thine own, as surely thou canst:
 Go to Olympus and supplicate Zeus for his help
 If ever by word or deed thou didst gladden his heart,
 For oft in my father's halls I heard from thy lips
 A deed thou didst vaunt, that thou among all the Immortals
 Alone Cronion didst save from ruin and shame
 When all the others were leagued to bind him in chains,
 E'en Hera and Lord Poseidon and Pallas Athena;
 Then didst thou go to him, Goddess, and loose him from bonds
 Having summon'd to high Olympus the Hundred-handed,
 Briareus nam'd by the Gods, Aegaeon by men,
 Whose strength is greater by far than his father's of old,
 And he sat by Cronion's side exultant, and they,
 The blessed Gods, were afraid nor bound him in chains.
 Remind him now of thy help and sit at his feet
 Embracing his knees, and beseech him the Trojans to help
 And hem the Danaans in by their ships on the strand,
 To slaughter doom'd, that they all may have joy of their Prince
 And the high King also, even Atrides himself,
 His blindness may know when he slighted the best of his peers.'
 And Thetis wept for her son and answer'd and said:
 'Woe's me! why did I bear thee, accurs'd that I am
 In my motherhood? would thou wert still carefree at the ships,
 Without sorrow or tears, since brief is thy portion in life!
 But now twice fated thou art, for sorrow as well
 O'er measure thou hast: in an evil hour thou wert born!
 Myself I will go to snowy Olympus and tell
 Thy saying to Zeus of the storm if perchance he may hear,
 And thou meanwhile must abide by the swift-going ships
 Indulging thy wrath, but refrain thee wholly from war.
For yesterday Zeus to the blameless Ethiops went,
 For a feast, and all the Immortals accompanied him,

had given a gift by Danaans

But twelve days hence, when Zeus to Olympus returns,
Then to his house of the Brazen Floor will I go
And his knees embrace; and I think to win him by prayer.'

So spake she and went her way, and Achilles she left
Grieving at heart for the lovely maid that the King
Had taken from him by force. But Odysseus the while
To Chrysa's strand had the holy hecatomb brought;
Soon as their ship to the deep-water haven had won,
They furl'd up the sail and stow'd it the vessel within
And lower'd the mast by the stays to rest on its crutch
And sat to the oars and the ship to an anchorage row'd
And, dropping the mooring-stones, made fast to the shore,
And themselves disembark'd on the surf-beaten strand of the
sea

And brought the hecatomb forth for the far-shooting God;
And last Chrysëis herself stepp'd down to the beach.
Her did the wary Odysseus lead to the shrine
And into her father's keeping gave her, and spake:
'O Chryses, King Agamemnon has sent me to thee
To deliver thy daughter and offer a hecatomb meet
To Phoebus Apollo thy Lord, to propitiate him,
Who now on the Danaans woe and weeping has brought.'
So spake he, and Chryses receiv'd his daughter with joy.

Then drove they the glorious hecatomb up from the strand
And around the well-built altar ranged it aright
And wash'd their hands and the meal of sprinkling receiv'd,
And Chryses lifted his hands and pray'd to the God:
'Hear me, O Lord of the bow, that rulest with power
O'er Chrysa and holy Cilla and Tenedos' isle,
Apollo! as once aforetime thou heardest my prayer
And didst honour mé and the Danaans greatly afflict,
Hear now my prayer yet again and fulfil my desire:
Forthwith from their host the loathsome pestilence turn.'
So spake he, and Phoebus Apollo his suppliant heard;
And when all together had pray'd and sprinkled the meal,
They lifted the victims' heads and kill'd them and flay'd,
And, cutting the thigh-bones out, enclosed them in fat,
Folding it over, and laid raw collops on them;
And the old man burn'd them and bright wine over them pour'd,
And youths stood by him with five-prong'd forks in their hands.
When the thighs were consum'd and the vitals tasted by all,
Then sliced they the rest of the meat and pierc'd it on spits
And carefully roasted and drew all off from the fire.
So made they an end of their toil and, the banquet prepar'd,

They ate and were stinted in naught of the generous feast;
But, when they had sated desire both of meat and of drink
The servitors, brimming the bowls, pour'd out in the cups
The God's drink-offering and fill'd them again for the feast,
And all day long with music they worshipp'd the God
And sang the beautiful Paeon, hymning the praise
Of the Healer, and He as he heard it rejoic'd in his heart.

When the sun went down and darkness had come o'er the
earth,

By the ships' hawsers they laid them to rest on the beach,
But when rose-finger'd Dawn, the child of Morning, appear'd
Straightway put they to sea for the Danaan camp,
And Apollo the Healer sent them a following wind
And they lifted the mast and the white sail stretch'd on the
yard;

And the bellying canvas fill'd and the surge underneath
Sang loud at the stem, as it clove the sea in its course.
So sped the ship o'er the waves, fulfilling her voyage,
And arriv'd at the far-spread camp of the Danaan host;
There brought they their vessel to shore and beach'd her again
High on the sand, and the legs let down underneath,
And, themselves dispersing, went to their huts by the ships.

But he by the swift-going ships sat nursing his wrath,
Heav'n-born Pelëides, swift-footed Achilles;
No more the assembly, the glory of heroes, he sought
Nor went into battle, but, still consuming his heart
By his own ships, for the war-cry yearn'd and the battle.
But when thereafter the twelfth day's morning was come,
Then to Olympus the Gods immortal return'd
Led by the Father, and Thetis forgot not the charge
Of her son, but, rising up from the wave of the sea
At earliest morn, to heav'n and Olympus she soar'd
And found the all-seeing Father seated apart.
On the topmost peak of ridgy Olympus he sat,
And she knelt at his feet, her left hand clasping his knees,
And touch'd his chin with her right as she gaz'd in the eyes
Of the Father Cronian Zeus, and address'd him with prayer:
"O Father Zeus, if ever among the Immortals
I help'd thee by word or deed, fulfil my desire;
Honour my son, for his life is swiftly foredoom'd,
And now has King Agamemnon, dishonouring him,
Taken his guerdon by force and holds her himself.
Avenge him thou, wise-judging Olympian Zeus,
And victory grant to the Trojans, until the Achaeans

Rue the despite and honour and glorify him.’
She spake, and the Cloud-compeller said not a word
But long continued in silence, and Thetis the while
Clung as she knelt at his feet and besought him again:
‘Promise me now of a surety and nod thy assent,
Or deny me, since naught is to fear, that so I may know
How I among all the Immortals in honour am least.’
Then, greatly troubled, the Cloud-compeller replied:
‘Sad work is this of a truth!’ Thou wilt set me at strife
With Hera, quick to provoke me with words of reproach;
Even as it is, she upbraids me before the Immortals,
Saying that I cease not to help the Trojans in fight.
But do thou make speed and return, lest Hera should mark,
And all these matters will I take thought to fulfil.
Lo now! I bow with my head, thou mayst see and believe,
For the surest token among the Immortals is this:
No word that I speak can be false or révocable
Nor fail of fulfilment, when pledg’d by the nod of my head.’
So spake Cronion, and nodded his coal-black brows,
The while on his deathless head the ambrosial locks
Wav’d, and mighty Olympus was shaken, and reel’d.

So took they counsel and parted, and Thetis was gone
From shining Olympus and leapt to the deeps of the sea,
But Zeus to his palace went, and the Gods in accord
Rose from their seats at his coming: not one of them dar’d
Sitting await him, but all in his presence arose,
And straightway he sate on his throne, and Hera was ware
When she saw her husband that Thetis the silvery-footed,
The Ancient’s daughter, had been in counsel with him;
And with taunting words she address’d Cronion and spake:
‘Thou schemer, who of the Gods conspires with thee now?
’Tis ever thy way to hold thee aloof from thy wife,
And hatch thy judgments in secret: thou never has deign’d
Of thine own goodwill to declare thy purpose to me.’
And the Father of Gods and men made answer and said:
‘Think not, O Hera, all my sayings to know
But refrain, for hard would it be, my wife tho’ thou art;
What word soever for others is seemly to hear
None shall know it before thee of Gods or of men,
But whatso I choose to decide apart from the Gods
Be thou not curious therein nor question ask.’
And Hera, the great-eyed Goddess, answer’d again:
‘Dread son of Cronos, what word is this thou hast said?
Surely aforetime I ask’d not, nor question’d thee:

Thou wert free to consider in peace the counsel thou wouldst.
But now am I sorely afraid lest the Ancient's daughter,
The silvery-footed Thetis, thy will have beguill'd,
✓ For at earliest morn she sat by thee clasping thy knees
And, by surest token, methinks thou gavest assent
To honour Achilles and slay the rest at the ships.'
And her did the Cloud-compeller in answer address:
'Lady, alack! mistrustful still as of old,
My secrets thou mayst not read, but the further shalt be
✓ From my heart's affection, and that shall be harder for thee:
If it be as thou sayst, my pleasure is reason enough.
Sit thou therefore in silence and do as I bid
Lest all the Gods in Olympus avail not to save
When my irresistible hands I lay upon thee.'
So spake he, and great-eyed Hera was sorely afraid
And obey'd him, and silent sat restraining her heart.

But the Gods in the palace of heaven were troubled in mind,
And Hephaestus, the glorious smith, to harangue them began,
Humouring white-arm'd Hera, his mother belov'd:
'Sorry work will it be and not to be borne
If for mortals' sake ye twain together shall strive,
Banding words in our midst: no joy any more
In the goodly feast will there be, since evil must win.
Therefore I counsel my mother, tho' wise in herself,
To humour our Father Zeus that he may not again
Strive or upbraid and confusion bring on the feast.
If Olympian Zeus, the Lord of the Lightning, but choose
To dash the Gods from their seats, he is stronger by far
And helpless were we. Nay, answer him gently, O mother,
And straightway again will our Father be gracious to us.'
So spake he and rose, and a twi-cupp'd goblet he bore
To set in his mother's hands and address'd her and said:
'Courage, O mother! Vex'd tho' thou be in thy heart
Yet endure, lest haply I see thee, dear as thou art,
Chasten'd before me and all my grief be in vain
To save thee, for hard to oppose is Olympian Zeus.
For aforetime once on a day, when I came to thy help,
By the foot he caught me and hurl'd from the threshold of
heaven;

All day long did I plunge, but at setting of sun
In Lemnos I fell to the earth, scarce drawing my breath,
And there the Sintians tended me, bruise'd with my fall.'
So spake he, and white-arm'd Hera smil'd at his words
And, smiling, the goblet took at the hands of her son;

Then fill'd he the cups of the rest with nectar divine
From left to right, as he drew it off from the bowl,
And quenchless laughter among the Immortals arose
When they saw Hephaestus bustling about in the hall.
And so for a livelong day till setting of sun
They drank and were stinted in naught of the generous feast
Or the strains of the beautiful lyre in Apollo's hands
Or the lovely song of the Muses, answering the lyre.
But soon as the sun's bright lamp had wester'd and set
Then went they each to his home to lay them to rest
Where the limping Fire-god, the fam'd Hephaestus, had built
By cunning smith-craft a palace for each of the Gods;
And Olympian Zeus, the Lightener, sought to his bed
Where erst he was wont when sweet sleep visited him:
There slept he, with Hera the golden-thron'd by his side.

By means of a false dream, Zeus persuades Agamemnon to muster the Achæan host. A list of the peoples and warriors engaged in the struggle.

ALL night long did the Gods and warfaring men
 Sleep unwaking, but Zeus was not holden of sleep,
 Pondering how he should honour godlike Achilles
 But many another Achæan destroy at the ships;
 And this was the counsel that seem'd to him best in his mind,
 To send upon lord Agamemnon a mischievous dream,
 And he utter'd his voice and in winged words to it spake:
 'Go, false Dream, to the swift-faring Danaan ships
 And, entering the hut of Atrides, stand o'er his bed
 And speak to him plainly every word I shall say;
 Command him to summon the long-hair'd Achæans to arms,
 Full muster, for wide-way'd Ilium now may he take;
 No longer the deathless Gods in Olympus that dwell
 Are divided in counsel, for all their hearts have been turn'd
 By the prayers of Hera, and woes on the Trojans are knit.'
 He spake and away went the Dream, having heard what he said,
 And quickly arriv'd at the swift-going Danaan ships
 And enter'd the hut of Atrides and found him abed
 Slumb'ring, for sleep ambrosial had fall'n upon him;
 And he bent o'er his head, like Neleian Nestor in form
 Whom Atrides of all the chieftains honour'd the most—
 Like him did the heav'n-sent Dream address him and say:
 'Sleep'st thou, O son of horse-taming Atreus the wise?
 To sleep through the night beseems not a ruler of men
 Charg'd with a people's good and the cares of the state.
 Hark to me now, for from Zeus a message I bring
 Who cares for thee, far tho' he be, and has pity on thee;
 He commands thee to summon the long-hair'd Achæans to
 arms,
 Full muster, for wide-way'd Ilium now mayst thou take;
 No longer the deathless Gods in Olympus that dwell
 Are divided in counsel, for all their hearts have been turn'd
 By the prayers of Hera, and woes on the Trojans are knit.
 Heed thou His bidding and let not forgetfulness rule
 Thy heart when the honey'd sleep from thy eyelids shall fall.'

So spake he, and left Atrides in slumberous drowse
Deeming within him the thing that should not be fulfill'd;
For he hoped that the city of Priam that day he should take
Fond man! and knew not the thought in the mind of the God
Who will'd yet again in many a murderous fight
To bring on the Trojans and Danaans weeping and woe.
And he woke from his sleep with the heavenly voice in his ears
And upright sate and his fine-woven doublet did on,
Glistening and soft, and his great cloak over it cast;
Next, under his gleaming feet his sandals he bound
And his broad-sword, studded with silver, slung at his side
And, grasping his father's sceptre imperishable,
Strode 'mong the ships of the bronze-mail'd Danaan host.
But soon as the Dawn-goddess came to Olympus on high
Announcing to Zeus and all the Immortals the day
Atrides commanded the clear-voic'd heralds to cry
The long-hair'd Achaeans in full assembly to meet
And they cried the summons and all were gather'd with speed.
But first a council of great-hearted chieftains he call'd
Beside the vessel of Nestor, the Pylian King,
And thus in their presence his cunning counsel he shap'd:
'Hearken, my friends! A dream I have had from above
That came through the night ambrosial; Nestor in chief
Did it most resemble in form and feature and height,
And over my pillow it stood and a word to me spake:
"Sleepest thou, O son of horse-taming Atreus the wise?
To sleep through the night beseems not a ruler of men
Charg'd with a people's good and the cares of a state.
Hark to me now, for from Zeus a message I bring
Who cares for thee, far tho' he be, and has pity on thee.
He commands thee to call the long-hair'd Achaeans to arms,
Full muster, for wide-way'd Ilion now mayst thou take—
No longer the deathless Gods in Olympus that dwell
Are divided in counsel, for all their hearts have been turn'd
By the prayers of Hera and woes on the Trojans are knit
By the will of the Father. Heed thou his word in thy heart."
He spake and was flown, and sweet sleep left me anon.
Come, let us call the sons of Achaea to arms,
But first I will prove them in speech, as fitting it is,
Bidding them flee in their well-bench'd ships to their homes,
And do ye from this side and that dissuade them from flight.'

So spake he and sate him down and among them arose
Neleian Nestor, of sandy Pylos the King,
Who now with kindly intent harangued them and spake:

'Friends, captains, and counsellors all that in Argos have power,

If now any other Achæan had told you this dream
A lie might we deem its message and deaf to it be,
But the dreamer was he that avows him the best of us all;
Come then, call me the sons of Achæa to arms.'

So spake he and went from the council, leading the way,
And the sceptred princes rose to their feet and obey'd
The shepherd of men, and the people hasten'd to them;
And even as the tribes of the bees from a cavernous rock
Fly forth on the air, and in ceaseless procession they come
As over the springtime blossoms they swarm and alight,
Then thickly they flutter and rise on this hand and that,
E'en so did many a tribe from the ships and the huts
By companies march on the sands of the low-lying beach
To the place of assembly, and Rumour blaz'd in their midst.
Zeus' messenger, bidding them speed, and soon they were met.
But the place of assembly was all in an uproar, and earth
Groan'd as they sate them down, and turmoil arose.

Nine heralds with voices uplifted their clamour restrain'd
And bade them give heed to the princes foster'd of Zeus,
Yet hardly at last would they keep in their places and sit
And cease from their turmoil. And King Agamemnon arose
With the sceptre in hand, that Hephaestus had wrought by his craft;

Hephaestus gave it to Zeus, the King of the Gods,
And he to the Messenger-god, the slayer of Argus,
And Hermes gave it to Pelops the charioteer,
And Pelops again to Atreus, shepherd of men,
And Atreus next to Thyestes, wealthy in flocks,
Left it, and he to King Agamemnon in turn,
Of many an island and far-spread Argos the heir.
Thereon did he lean as he spake to the Argives his word:
'Friends, Danaan braves that of Ares' company are,
Cronion has bound me in grievous blindness of soul,
Hard-hearted, who promis'd erewhile with the nod of his head
That home I should go but only when Troy I had sack'd,
Yet now has he basely deceiv'd me and bids me return
To Argos disgrac'd, with thousands slain of my folk.
So is it pleasing to-day to almighty Zeus
Who many a stronghold's head has abas'd in the dust
And still shall abase, for his is the power over all.
Shame were it now for a new generation of men
To hear how this host of Achæa, so goodly and great,

Waged but a bootless warfare, fighting in vain
With scantier foes, and as yet no end is in sight.
Yet mark, were we minded, Achaeans and Trojans alike
To swear to a binding truce and number ourselves
And muster every Trojan native to Troy
And we the Achaeans by tens should marshal ourselves
And every ten had a Trojan to pour out their wine,
Then verily many a ten should a cupbearer lack;
So much do the sons of Achaea outnumber their foes
In Troyland dwelling. But allies have they besides
From many a city, warriors that fight with the spear,
Who baffle my purpose and thwart me and suffer me not
For all my striving to sack Troy's bastion'd town.
Nine years already has great Zeus brought to an end
And our ships and timbers are rotted, our tackle is loos'd,
And our wives and innocent children sit in our halls
Awaiting still our return; yet the task is undone,
The end unachiev'd that brought the Achaeans to Troy.
Come then, hear ye my counsel and hearing obey:
Let us flee in our ships to our own dear country o'ersea,
For wide-way'd Ilion now we never shall take.'

So spake he and stirr'd the spirit in every breast
Through all the assembly save those that knew his design,
And the mass was sway'd like the mighty waves of the deep
When East wind and South wind swell the Icarian main
Rushing adown from the Storm-god's cloud in the heav'n;
And ev'n as a cornfield is mov'd when Zephyrus blows
With furious blast and the ears bow down to the earth,
So was the multitude mov'd and all with a cheer
Rush'd to the ships and the dust from under their feet
Stood like a cloud. Then each one call'd upon other
To handle the vessels and drag them down to the sea,
And they clear'd the slips and the noise ascended to heav'n
Of their hurrying home as they loos'd the props from the hulls.
Then soon against Fate had the Argives achiev'd their return
Had Hera not mark'd and a word to the Argives address'd:
'Out on it, daughter of Zeus, thou weariless Maid,
Must these things be? Should the Argives flee and return
Over the sea's broad back to their country again,
Leaving to Priam and Priam's people their boast,
Helen of Argos, for whose sake many a man
Has perish'd in Troyland far from his country and home?
Rise now and go 'mid the bronze-coated Danaan host
And with words of gentle reproof each warrior restrain

Nor let them their round ships launch in the brine of the sea.'
She spake and the Goddess, grey-eyed Athena, obey'd
And down from the peaks of Olympus darted her way
And quickly arriv'd at the swift-going Danaan ships.
There found she Odysseus, in counsel a peer of the Gods,
Standing alone, for sorrow had enter'd his soul
And he on his great black vessel laid not a hand,
And Athena, standing beside him, the hero address'd:
'Heav'n-born son of Laertes, wary Odysseus,
Must these things be? Will ye leap on your well-furnish'd
ships

To flee o'er the sea to your own dear country again,
Leaving to Priam and Priam's people their boast,
Helen of Argos, for whose sake many a man
Has perish'd in Troyland far from his country and home?
Go now through the hosts of Achaea and fail not herein
But with words of gentle reproof each warrior restrain
Nor let them their round ships launch in the brine of the sea.'

So spake she and, hearing, he knew the voice of a God
And started to run and his mantle cast on the ground
And his herald and squire, Eurybates, took it in charge;
And himself to Atrides, King Agamemnon, he went
And receiv'd at his hand his sceptre imperishable
And strode 'mid the ships of the bronze-mail'd Danaan host.
Now whenso he came to a prince or a notable man
He would stand at his side and restrain with gentle reproof:
'Good sir, it beseems not to threaten the prince as a churl;
Be seated thyself and make all the people to sit.
The mind of Atrides thou knowest not clearly as yet—
He is proving your temper and soon will afflict you the more,
For heard we not all at the council the word that he spake?
Beware lest in anger he scourge the sons of Achaea
For proud is the spirit of Kings that are foster'd of Zeus;
From Zeus is their honour, by wise-judging Zeus they are lov'd.'
But whomso he saw of the common shouting aloud
Him would he chase with his sceptre and chide him in speech:
'Sirrah, be still, and wait for another to speak,
Be taught by thy betters, no warrior or leader art thou
But a weakling and nothing accounted in counsel or war.
Not all we Achaeans, methinks, can be Kings in a state;
Small wisdom were that, one only the master can be,
One only be King, to whomso Cronion has given
The sceptre and judgment-seat, that he rule over all.'
So ranged Odysseus the whole host masterfully

And back they stream'd at his word from the ships and the huts
With a noise like the swelling wave of the loud-breaking sea
That breaks on a mile-long beach and Ocean resounds.
When the rest were seated and every man silent and still,
Thersites alone still brawl'd, unbridled of tongue,
His mind full-stored with speeches of idle abuse
Wherewith the princes to scold and his betters defame
And make fools laugh if any should listen to him;
Ill-favour'd he was above all that to Ilion came,
Bow-legged and lame of a foot, and his shoulders were round,
Drawn down o'er a sunken chest, and above there was set
A misshapen head with a patchy stubble of hair.
Most hateful was he to Odysseus and Pelëides
For these he revil'd above all, but now on Atrides
Shrill-voic'd he pour'd his abuse and the Danaans all
Were vex'd in their hearts and to indignation were mov'd,
But still unasham'd Agamemnon he loudly revil'd:
'Atrides, what is thy grudge? What lackest thou now?
Surely the huts with the bronze and the women are fill'd
Chosen out from the spoil which the sons of Achaea
Still give chiefly to thee when some city we sack.
Is it gold thou wantest as well, such as someone may bring
Of the horse-taming Trojans from Ilion to ransom a son
That I perchance or another a prisoner have made?
Or desirest thou some young mistress, to know her in love
And keep her apart for thyself? It little beseems
That their captain should bring the sons of Achaea to ill.
Soft fools, creatures of shame that are women, not men,
Homeward let us return and this craven we'll leave
In Troyland to gorge him with presents that so he may see
Whether our strength count also to help him or not
Who now has dishonour'd Achilles, his better by far,
And taken his guerdon by force and keeps her himself.
But a milksop now is Achilles, a spiritless man,
Else were this outrage, O son of Atreus, thy last.'

So spake Thersites, reviling the shepherd of men,
And straightway goodly Odysseus stood at his side
And, louting upon him, a hard word spake in rebuke:
'Thersites, reckless in speech, loud-voic'd in harangue,
Refrain now and seek not singly to strive with a King;
I deem not that any mortal is baser than thou
Of all that the sons of Achaea to Ilion led.
Be not so free with the names of Kings on thy lips,
Reviling their prowess but still with an eye on retreat;

We know not clearly as yet how these things shall be
Nor whether for good or for ill we shall homeward return.
Yet ever thou brawlest, upbraiding the shepherd of men,
Agamemnon Atrides, because he has many a gift
From the Danaan heroes, and still thou utterest thy taunts.
Now this will I say and it surely accomplish'd shall be:
If I find thee raving hereafter as now thou hast rav'd,
No more may Odysseus' head on his shoulders remain
Nor may he be call'd the father of Telemachus
If I take thee not and strip thy garments from thee,
Thy mantle and tunic too that thy nakedness hide,
And thyself I will send in tears to the swift-going ships
Having driven thee forth with shameful stripes on thy back.'
So spake he and smote with his staff on his shoulders and back
And he cower'd in pain and a big tear roll'd from his eye
And a blood-red weal stood up on the skin of his back
'Neath the golden sceptre. Down he sate in amaze
And wiped with a wry grimace the tear from his cheek,
And the others tho' ill-content laugh'd lightly at him
And thus as he look'd at his neighbour would many a one say:
'Go to, then, Odysseus has wrought good service ere now
Both leading in counsel and ordering the battle array,
But never a better deed has he done for Achaea
Than stopping this chattering railer's noisy harangues.
Not soon, methinks, will his proud soul prompt him again
To strive with a King and revile him with scurrilous words.'

So said the many; Odysseus, waster of towns,
Rose sceptre in hand, and the grey-eyed Maid at his side
In the guise of a herald for silence call'd in the host
That the sons of Achaea, both nearest and farthest, might hear
The words that he spake and so to his counsel give heed,
Who now with kindly intent harangued them and said:
'Atrides, now are thy people minded, O King,
To make thee the most despis'd of men on this earth
Nor will they the promise fulfil that they pledg'd thee erewhile,
When still from horse-rearing Argos hither they march'd,
That Ilion's walls thou shouldst raze or never return;
For like witless children or widow'd wives they complain
And clamour each to the other that home they shall go.
Yea, toil there is more than enough to drive a man home;
For the sailor, delay'd but one month far from his wife,
Ye know how he frets himself, confin'd in his ship,
Prison'd by winter's gale and tumultuous seas,
But for us 'tis the ninth year now that circles its course

And here we are waiting: I do not wonder at you
If ye fret by your high-beak'd ships, yet nevertheless
'Twere shameful to wait so long and empty depart.
Courage! my friends, and wait for a while till ye see
Whether Colchas the seer be a true prophet or not;
For one thing surely we witness'd and know for a truth,
Whomso the fates of death have not carried away,
How, one day or two after Aulis the muster had seen
Of our black ships laden with trouble for Priam and Troy,
When we round a spring on the holy altars of stone
To the Gods immortal were offering hecatombs meet,
Under a fair-leav'd plane whence the clear water flash'd
A portent appear'd; for a snake, blood-red on the back,
Awe-inspiring, by Zeus sent forth to the light,
Darted from under the altar and flash'd to the tree.
A brood of sparrows there was, scarce feather'd for flight,
Nestling under the leaves of the uppermost bough,
Eight young ones by tale and the mother herself was the ninth,
And the serpent these fledglings, piteously cheeping, devour'd
While the mother flutter'd about him bewailing her brood.
Then, coiling himself, her too did he seize by the wing,
And when he had swallow'd them all, both mother and young,
The God that reveal'd him, the son of Cronos himself,
Show'd us a manifest sign and turn'd him to stone,
And we marvell'd, spellbound, to see the thing that was done.
E'en so did the portent mix with the sacrifices
And straightway Calchas, expounding the miracle, spake:
'Why, pray, why are ye silent, ye long-hair'd Achaeans?
Wise-counselling Zeus has shown us a wonderful sign,
Late sent and late in fulfilment, whose fame shall not die.
As the serpent devour'd both brood and the mother herself
And the young ones were eight but nine was the number of
all,

So many years shall we war on the Ilian plain;
In the tenth year the wide-streeted town we shall take.'

So spake the prophet, and all these things are fulfill'd;
Come, then, wait ye a while, ye well-greav'd Achaeans,
And bide where ye are till Priam's great city we take.'
He spake, and the Argives cheer'd and their vessels around
Terribly echoed the shouts of the Danaan men
As they cried approval of godlike Odysseus's words.
Then Nestor, Gerenian Knight, address'd him and said:
'Great heavens! Ye hold assembly like frivolous boys,
Mere babes that reck not at all of the business of war.

What, pray, of our covenants and our plighted troths shall become?

For now may the counsels and compacts be cast in the fire,
Libations and pledges, wherein we trusted before.
We wrangle as though they were naught, yet no issue we find
Nor in anything prosper for all our tarrying here.
Do thou, O Atrides, steeling thy heart as before,
Lead the Achaeans amidst the violent fray,
And these—let them perish, the one or two in the host
That are secretly scheming (far be fulfilment from them!)
To depart to Argos and ever they certainly know
If the promise of mighty Cronion be truth or a lie.
For I tell you that Zeus almighty pledg'd us his word
The day that the Argives embark'd on their swift-faring ships
Bringing slaughter and doom to the people of Troy
When his lightning he show'd on our right, sure omen of good.
Therefore let us make haste to return to our home
Ere each with some Trojan's wife have lain and aveng'd
The strife and the groanings that Helen has brought upon us;
But if any so fiercely desire to depart to his home
Forthwith let him lay but a hand on his well-timber'd ship
And the first he shall be to encounter the fate of his death.
Take good counsel, O King, with thyself and from me,
For the word that I now shall utter not vain shall it be:
Divide the army, Atrides, by tribes and by clans
That clan help its kindred clan and tribe succour tribe.
This if thou do and the sons of Achaea obey
Then shalt thou know which are cowards, which also are brave,
Both captains and common, for each one will fight for his kin,
Know too if the voice of a God thy victory bans
Or a craven spirit in men and their folly in fight.'

And him did lord Agamemnon in answer address:
'Once more, old man, thou excellest in counsel o'er all:
O Zeus and Athena and Phoebus, would that I had
Ten such advisers among the Achaeans as thou,
Then quickly should Priam's city be laid in the dust,
Captive and wasted under our conquering hand,
But Cronian Zeus almighty has brought on me woe,
Casting my lot amid fruitless wrangling and broils.
For ye know how Achilles and I o'er a damsel have fought
With violent words, and 'twas I that the quarrel began;
But were we but one in council, no more should there be
Postponement, ev'n for an instant, of evil for Troy.
Go now to your meal that the battle at once we may join;

Let each well sharpen his spear and bestow well his shield
And well provision his fleet-footed horses with corn,
Look well to his chariot and well for the battle prepare,
That all day long we may fight and the issue decide.
No pause shall there be, no respite, no, not a whit,
But only the coming of night man's fury shall part,
And, hear ye, on each man's breast the baldrick shall sweat
Of his covering shield, and his hand shall be numb on the spear
And his horses shall sweat as they strain at the well-polish'd car.
And whomso I light upon minded to skulk by the ships
Far from the field of the fight, for him shall there be
Small hope hereafter the dogs and the birds to escape.'

He spake, and the Argives shouted loud as a wave
On a steep beach when the Southwind drives it and hurls
On a jutting rock that the billows leave not at peace
Nor the winds from the quarters of heaven that ceaselessly
blow.

And they rose and scatter'd with speed, each man to his ship,
And lighting fires in the huts made ready their meal,
And each one sacrifice made to one of the Gods
Praying to be spar'd from death and the tumult of war.
And the King of men, Agamemnon, his offering made,
A fat bull five years old, to mighty Cronion,
And summon'd the princes that captain'd the Danaan host,
Nestor in chief and the Cretan Idomeneus,
Diomed, Tydeus' son and the Ajaxes both,
And sixthly Odysseus, in counsel a peer of the Gods;
And, last, Menelaus his brother unbidden came
For well did he know in his heart what work was afoot.
And they stood round the bull and the meal of sprinkling
receiv'd

And Atrides the King in their midst made prayer to the God:
'Zeus, glorious and great, storm-clouded, that dwell'st in the
sky,

Vouchsafe that the sun never set nor the darkness descend
Till the palace of Priam the King I have laid in the dust,
Blacken'd with smoke, and have burn'd its doorways with fire,
And the doublet on Hector's breast have slit with the sword
And hewn it to shreds, and may many a comrade of his
Lie prone on the earth beside him, biting the dust.'
He pray'd, but Cronion his prayer fulfill'd not as yet;
His gifts he receiv'd but his labour heavier made.
And straightway when they had pray'd and sprinkled the meal
They lifted the victim's head and kill'd him and flay'd

And, cutting the thighbones out, enclos'd them in fat,
Folding it over, and laid raw collops on them,
And these they burn'd on cleft boughs stripp'd of their leaves
And spitted the vitals and held o'er Hephaestus's flame.
When the thighs were consum'd and the vitals tasted by all
Then sliced they the rest of the meat and pierc'd it on spits
And carefully roasted and drew all off from the fire,
So made they an end of their toil and, the banquet prepar'd,
They ate and were stinted in naught of the generous feast;
But, when they had sated desire both of meat and of drink,
The Knight, Gerenian Nestor, utter'd his word:
'Most glorious Atrides, King of men, Agamemnon,
No longer discourse we together nor longer delay
To handle the work that Cronion has giv'n us to do,
But come, let the heralds throughout the bronze-coated host
Make proclamation to gather them all by the ships;
And let us in company go through the wide-scatter'd camp
That the speedier we may awaken the fury of war.'

He spake and the King of men disobey'd not his word
But straightway commanded the shrill-voic'd heralds to cry
And summon the long-hair'd Achaeans to arm for the fight.
So did they cry and the Danaans muster'd with speed,
And the heav'n-nurtur'd chiefs in the train of Atrides the King
Busily marshall'd them; there too was Athena
That the glorious aegis, ageless and deathless, had on,
Whose hundred tassels of fine gold wav'd in the wind,
All cunningly woven and each one a hecatomb worth;
Therewith through the host of Achaea dazzling she pass'd
Urging them forth, and courage in every breast
Inspir'd for the battle and steel'd them to fight to the end,
And war to them all was straightway dearer than home
Or to sail in their ships to their own dear country afar;
And ev'n as a forest is kindled by ravaging fire
On a mountain's peaks and the blaze is seen from afar,
E'en so, as they march'd, from the bronze innumerable
A gleam went up through the aether shining to heaven.
As the feather'd tribes of the birds in multitude fly,
Wild geese or cranes or long-neck'd swans in a flock,
On the Asian mead round Cayster's watery vale
And have joy in their plumage, as hither and thither they wheel
Or with loud cries settle and all the meadow resounds,
So many the nations of men from the huts and the ships
Fill'd the Scamandrian plain and the earth underneath
Terribly echoed the tramp of the horses and men;

So took they their stand on Scamander's flowery plain,
As leaves and flowers in their season innumerable.
Thick as the tribes of flies in a steading of kine,
That over the brimming milkpails hover and buzz
In the season of spring when the milk o'erflows the pails,
So thick did the long-hair'd Achaeans stand on the plain
In face of the Trojans, eager their bodies to rend.
And ev'n as goatherds their flocks, wide-ranging, divide
Each from the other when roaming at pasture they mix
So did the captains array them on this side and that
To go into battle, and lord Agamemnon in chief,
His head and his eyes like Zeus that the thunderbolt wields,
His waist like the War-god, his breast like the God of the sea,
Array'd them; and ev'n as a bull stands out in a herd,
Conspicuous seen in the midst of the pasturing kine,
E'en so on that day did Zeus make Atrides the King
Pre-eminent far above all, among heroes the chief.

Tell me, ye Muses, that mansions have in Olympus,
For ye are divine and are present and everything know
While we hear only a rumour and know not the truth,
Tell me then which of the Argives were captains and chiefs;
The many I never could tell nor number nor name
Not ev'n if ten tongues were mine with ten mouths thereto
And a weariless voice and a heart of bronze in my breast,
Save the Olympian Muses, the daughters of Zeus,
Should tell me the names of them all that to Ilios came.
Of the captains then will I speak and the ships in their train.
The Boeotian folk Penelaus and Leitus led,
Arcesilas, Prothoenor, Clonius the brave;
And their peoples in Hyria dwelt and the Aulian cliff,
In Schoenus and Scotus and Eteon's mountainous tract;
Thespeia and Graea and wide Mycalessian lawns,
And others in Harma, Erythrae and Eilesion;
And in Eleon they dwelt and Hyla and Peteon's plain,
Ocalea, and Medeon's fortified keep,
Copae, Eutresis, Thisbe, haunted of doves;
And from Coronea and green Haliartus they came
And high Plataea and Glisas' neighbouring town;
And their homes were in lesser Thebes with its bastion'd wall
And holy Onchestus, Poseidon's flowery grove;
And in Arne's vine-grown country and fertile Midea
And sacred Nisa and far Anthedon they dwelt.
Fifty ships they had sent, and in every ship
Six score warrior men, Boeotians, embark'd

But those that possess'd Aspledon and Orchomenus
Ascalaphus led and Ialmenus, scions of Ares,
Whom Astyoche in the palace of Actor the King,
Beautiful maid, in her own upper chamber conceiv'd
When with mighty Ares, the War-god, she privily lay;
And thirty by tale were the ships that went in their train.
The Phocians Schedius led and Epistrophus,
Sons of great-hearted Iphitus, Naubolus' son;
These Cyparissus and rocky Pytho possess'd
And holy Crisa and Daulis and Panopeus' town,
And round Anemorea's walls and Hyampolis dwelt;
And others by broad Cephissus their settlement had
And in high Lilaca hard by the springs of the stream;
And black ships forty in number went in their train.
So these by Iphitus' sons were marshall'd and led
And next the Boeotians, to leftward, stood in the line.
The Locrian men by Ajax, Æleus' son,
Were led—the less, for the greater was Telamon's son;
A linen corslet he wore and his stature was small
But all the Achaeans at throwing the spear he excell'd.
In Cynus and Opus they dwelt and in Calliarus
In Bessa and Scarpha and Augea's lovely domain
And Tarpha and Thronion around Boagrius' streams.
Forty sail was the fleet of the Locrian men
That opposite holy Euboea their settlements have.
Came next Euboean Abantes, wild-looking men,
That in Chalcis and Histiaea and Eretria dwelt
And sea-wash'd Cerinthus and Dios' rock-girdled keep,
And they that Carystus and lonely Styra possess'd;
Of these Elephenor, scion of Ares, was chief,
Chalcodon's son that ruled the Abantian tribes;
And other Abantes he led that are long-hair'd behind,
Fierce spearmen, eager to thrust with their good ashen spears
And tear the corslets of mail from the breasts of their foes;
And black ships forty in number went in his train.
Next they that Athena's goodly citadel held,
Domain of Erectheus the great whom Athena of old
Foster'd, when grain-giving Earth had brought him to birth,
And in Athens seated, her own rich sanctuary,
Whom still with bulls and with rams the Athenian youth
Worship to-day as the years in their courses go round—
These did Menestheus captain, Peteos' son,
That no man on earth could rival in ordering a host,
Horsemen or footmen, warriors that fight with the shield,

Save Nestor alone, for he was his elder by birth.
Fifty ships was the number that sail'd in his train,
And Ajax Telamon brought from Salamis twelve
And next the Athenian phalanxes station'd his men.
And they of Argos and Tiryns girdled with walls
And Hermione and Asine, guarding the gulf,
Troezen, Eionae, Epidaurus of vines,
The Achaeans that held Aegina and Mases in fee—
Of these was Diomed captain, stalwart in fight,
And Sthenelus, glorious Copaeus' well-lov'd son,
And a third chief, Euryalus, peer of the Gods,
Son of a King, Mecisteus, Talaus' son.
But Diomed stalwart in fight was lord over all;
And black ships eighty in number follow'd the three.
And they that Mycenae's well-built citadel held,
Rich Corinth and fair Cleonae's bastion'd wall,
And they of Orneae and lovely Araethyraea
And Sicyon, where once Adrastus ruled as a King,
And Hyperesia's ridge and steep Gonoessa,
And they that round Pellene and Aegion dwelt
And all the coastland country and Helice's plain—
All these did Atrides, King Agamemnon, command
In a hundred ships, and the most and the goodliest folk
His following were, and himself, all glorious, was cloth'd
With bronze in their midst, pre-eminent he over all
Because he was greatest and most men led in his train.

And they that possess'd Lacedaemon's deep-riven vale
And Pharis and Sparta and Messa, haunted of doves,
And till'd Bryseia and Augea's lovely domain,
And they of Amyclae and Helos, wash'd by the sea,
And they that Laas possess'd and in Oetylus dwelt—
These Menelaus Atrides captain'd and led
In sixty ships, array'd from his brother's apart;
And he march'd among them, trusting his passionate heart
And urg'd them to battle, for most he yearn'd to avenge
The strife and the groanings that Helen had brought upon him.
And they that in Pylos dwelt and lovely Arene
And Thryon, the land of Alpheus, and Aepy the steep,
And they of Cyparisseis and Amphigene
And Pteleus and Helus and Dorion; here was the place
Where the Muses Thamyris met, when from Oechalia,
Epytus' realm he journey'd, and ended his songs,
For he set himself up to vanquish the Muses themselves,
The daughters of Zeus, if against him they ventur'd to sing,

And they in their anger maim'd him and took from his lips
His wonderful gift and made of his harping an end—
Of these was the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, the chief,
And ninety sail was the fleet that went in his train.
And they that beneath Cyllene by Aepytus' tomb
Arcadia held, where warriors hand to hand fight,
And they of Pheneus and sheep-graz'd Orchomenus
And Rhipe and Stratia and windy Enispa beyond
And the Tegean plain and lovely Mantinea
And they that possess'd Stymphelus and Parrhasia
Of these Ancaeus' son, Agapenor, was chief
With sixty ships in his train; and in each of the ships
Were many Arcadian warriors, skill'd in the fight.
For King Agamemnon himself had given the ships,
E'en Atreus' son, wherein their crossing to make
O'er the wine-dark sea; for of seafaring nothing they know.
And Buprasion's men and they of the Elian plain
That between Hyrmina and Myrsinus' furthest bounds
And the great Olenian rock and Alesion dwelt—
Of these four leaders there were and to each were assign'd
Ten well-bench'd ships and many Epeians embark'd;
And some of them Thalpius, some Amphimachus led,
Son of Cteatus he and of Eurytus he,
Of some Amarynceus' son, Diores, was chief,
And the fourth band the noble Polyxenus led,
Son of a King, Agathenes, Augeas' son.

And they of Dulichium and the Echinean isles
That opposite Elis stand out over the sea
Were captain'd by Meges, a peer of the War-god in might,
Phyleides, whom the mighty Phyleus begat
When he came, enraged with his father, to Dulichium;
And black ships forty in number went in his train.
Odysseus next the proud Cephallenians led
That Ithaca held and Neriton's forested slopes
And Crocyleia and Aegilips, rugged and steep,
And men of Zacynthus and those in Samos that dwell
And the folk of the mainland country over the straits;
All these did Odysseus, a God in counsel, command
And twelve ships vermeil-painted he led in his train.
And Thoas, Andraemon's son, the Aetolians led;
Those that Pylene and Pleuron and Olenus held
And surf-beaten Chalcis and Calydon, rocky and wild,
For the sons of great-hearted Oeneus no more were alive
Nor Oeneus himself, and the fair Meleager was dead

To whom the power had been given to rule o'er the folk;
And black ships forty in number did Thoas command.
And the Cretans were led by Idomeneus, fam'd with the spear,
They that in Cnosus and high-wall'd Gortyna dwelt,
Miletus and Lyctus, Lycastus known for its chalk,
Phaestus and Rhytion, populous cities and strong,
And the rest of the folk in the hundred townships that dwelt;
All these Idomeneus captain'd, spearman renown'd,
With Meriones, of manslaying Ares the peer,
And black ships eighty in number went in their train.
And Hercules' son, Tlepolemus goodly and tall,
Led nine ships of the lordly Rhodian men
That in Rhodes in threefold settlement orderly dwelt
In Lyndus and Ialysus and chalky Camirus;
All these Tlepolemus led, renown'd with the spear,
Whom Astyocheia to mighty Hercules bore
When he, having sack'd many cities of heav'n-foster'd Kings,
Had brought her from Ephyra's keep by Selleis' stream,
And so in the well-built palace to manhood he grew
But anon his own father's uncle, Licymnius, kill'd,
An old man now though a scion of Ares, and then
Built him a fleet and much folk gather'd aboard
And over the deep went fleeing, since threaten'd he was
By the other sons and grandsons that Hercules had
And came in his wanderings to Rhodes, a suffering man,
And in three tribes settled his people who greatly were lov'd
By Cronian Zeus that of Gods and mortals is King,
And riches exceeding great Zeus pour'd upon them.
And three trim ships from Syme did Nireus command,
Nireus, that lovely Aglaea to Charopus bore,
The fairest to look on of all the Danaan host
That to Ilios came save blameless Achilles alone,
But a weakling he was, and his following feeble and few. ✓

And they of Nisyros and Casus and Crapathos' keep,
The Calydnian islands, and Cos, Eurypylus' realm—
These Phidippus and Antiphus captain'd and led,
Two sons of royal Thessalus, Hercules' son;
And thirty sail was the fleet that went in their train.
Then all the tribes that Pelagian Argos possess'd
And in Alus and Alope dwelt and the Trachian hills
And they of Phthia and Hellas, where women are fair,
Myrmidons, Hellenes, Achaeans (for so they are call'd)—
Of these with their fifty ships Achilles was chief;
But they took no thought any more of tumuli and war,

Since none there was in the battle to marshal their ranks,
 For swift-foot, godlike Achilles lay by the ships
 Wroth for the bright-hair'd maid, Brisëis the fair,
 The captive he won in Lyrnessus with travail and pain
 When Lyrnessus city and Thebe's fortress he sack'd
 And Mynes o'erthrew and Epistrophus, men of the spear,
 That were sons of King Euenus, Selopius' son;
 For her lay he grieving, who soon should terrible rise.
 And they that in Phylace and flowery Pyrasus dwelt,
 Demeter's precinct, and Iton, mother of flocks,
 And Antron that lies by the shore and Pteleus' meads—
 Of these was warlike Protesilaus the chief
 While living, but now did the black earth hold him in thrall
 And his widow he left in Phylace, rending her cheeks,
 And his house half-built; a Dardan spear'd him and slew
 When, first of the Danaans, he leapt from his ship to the land.
 Yet his folk were not leaderless left, though a leader they
 mourn'd,
 For Podarces, scion of Ares, marshal'd their ranks;
 Iphiclus' son and Phylacus' grandson was he,
 Being own brother of great-hearted Protesilaus
 Though the younger in years, and the elder brother, I trow,
 Was also his better, a hero mighty in war.
 Yet his people lack'd not a chief, though a good man they
 mourn'd;
 And black ships forty in number went in his train.
 And they that in Pherae dwelt by the Boebian mere,
 In Boebe and Glaphyra's keep and Iolcus the strong—
 Of these with elev'n ships Admetus' son was the chief,
 Eumelus, that Queen Alcestis bore to the King,
 Of all the daughters of Pelias the fairest of face.
 And they that possess'd Methone and Thaumacia
 And held Meliboea and rugged Olizon—of these
 Was Philoctetes, the bowman, captain and chief
 With their seven ships, and fifty oarsmen embark'd
 On each of the ships, well-skill'd to fight with the bow.
 But he, their prince, on an island languish'd in pain,
 Lemnos the fair, where the sons of Achaea had left him
 Sick of a grievous wound from a venomous snake;
 So lay he pining, yet soon were his Danaan peers
 Doom'd to bethink them of Philoctetes again.
 Yet his folk were not leaderless left, though a leader they
 mourn'd,
 For Medon array'd them, Æleus' base-gotten son

That Rhene bore to Æleus, sacker of towns.
And they that in Tricca dwelt and terraced Ithome
And Oechalia, that was Eurytus' bastion'd town—
These the Asclepian brothers, leeches of skill,
Machaon and brave Podalirius captain'd and led,
And thirty sail was the fleet that went in their train.
And they of Ormenius and the fount Hypereia
And Asterium and Titanus' snow-sprinkled crests
Eurypylus led, Euaemon's glorious son,
And black ships forty in number went in his train.
And they of Argissa and high Gyrtona's domain
That Orthia, Elona, and white Oloosson possess'd,
These Polypoetes captain'd, steadfast in fight,
Pirithöus' son that Zeus immortal begat.
Him Hippodamia conceiv'd by Pirithous
That day when his vengeance he took on the wild mountain-men,
The shag-hair'd Centaurs, and drove them from Pelion's
height.

And Leontes, scion of Ares, shar'd his command,
Son of the kingly Coronus, Caeneus' son;
And black ships forty in number went in their train.
And Gouneus from Cyphus brought ships twenty and two
And led the Enienes and sturdy Peraebian tribes
That around Dodona their winterly settlements have
And those that the grain-lands along Titaresius fill
That pours his clear-flowing stream into Peneus' bed
Yet it mingles not with those waters silvery-grey
But smoothly flows o'er his surface, even as oil,
For he is an offspring from Styx inviolable.

Magnesian folk fleet Prothous captain'd and led
That around Peneius and Pelion's forested heights
Their dwelling-place have; and Prothous led them to war,
And black ships forty in number sail'd in his train.
These then were captains and chiefs of the Danaan host;
Tell me, O Muse, who among them was foremost and best,
Of warriors or horses, that follow'd Atrides to Troy.
The horses of Pheres' son were the goodliest far,
Eumelus's mares, swift-footed and fleet as a bird,
In coat and in age and in stature match'd to a hair;
Phoebus Apollo had rear'd them, the lord of the bow,
Two mares, and the terror of battle they carried with them.
Of warriors the foremost was Ajax, Telamon's son,
While the wrath of Achilles endur'd; for he was the best,
He and the horses that bore great Pelëides,

But idle he lay by the high-beak'd seafaring ships
In his deadly rage 'gainst Atrides, shepherd of men,
And his Myrmidon braves on the surf-beaten strand of the sea
Made sport with the quoits each day or with casting of spears
Or drawing the bow; and their horses, each by his car,
Champing clover and parsley cull'd from the marsh
Stood, and their masters' chariots lay in the huts
Dismantled and stor'd, and his men for their warrior chief
Yearn'd, wandering at large through the camp, nor fought any
more.

And the host march'd as 'twere fire devouring the plain
And the earth groan'd, as it might at the anger of Zeus
Whose joy is in thunder, when, lightning, he lashes the earth
Round Typhon or Arima's mount where they say is his couch;
So terribly groan'd the earth with the tramp of their feet
As they march'd, and quickly they pass'd o'er the breadth of
the plain.

Then came to the Trojans fleet-footed Iris with speed
And from Zeus almighty a grievous message she brought,
Where assembly they held at the gate of Priam the King
And young men and old men together in council were met;
There Iris, standing beside them, address'd them and spake:
In voice like Polites, the son of Priam the King,
That, trusting his fleetness of foot, as sentinel sat
On the top of the barrow of Aesyetes the old
Watching the hour when the Danaans should sally from camp—
Like him did fleet-footed Iris the Trojans address:
'Old man, words o'er measure are pleasing to thee
Now as in peace-time; yet still is no respite from war.
Many a time have I enter'd the battles of men
Yet never have seen so goodly a host or so great,
For thick as the leaves of the forest or sands of the sea
They march o'er the plain to fight around Ilion's walls.
But, Hector, 'tis thee that I charge my bidding to do;
Seeing your allies are many in Ilion town
And the tongues among diverse nations so different are,
Let each give the word to those whose chieftain he is
And lead his countrymen forth and array them for fight.'
So spake she, and Hector knew 'twas the voice of a God
And dismiss'd the assembly at once, and they rush'd to their
arms,

And the gateway was open'd wide and the host issued forth,
Footmen and horsemen, and great was the din that arose.
In front of the gate is a barrow rounded and steep,

Apart on the plain, with a clear space this way and that;
Among men it goes by the name of Bramble-thorn Hill,
But 'tis call'd by Immortals the tomb of Myrina the fleet,
And here did the Trojans and allies their forces array.

The Trojans themselves by bright-plum'd Hector were led,
Priam's son, and the most and goodliest by far
Were Hector's following, eager to fight with the spear.
The Dardans were led by Anchises' glorious son,
Aeneas, whom fair Aphrodite bore to the prince
When on Ida's spurs she had lain with him, Goddess with man,
And noble Antenor's sons, Archelochus brave
And Acamas, masters of warfare, shared his command.
And they of Zeleia, 'neath Ida's nethermost spur,
Rich men, kinsmen of Troy, that the dark waters drink
Of Aesepus, were led by Lycaon's glorious son
Pandarus, arm'd with a bow from Apollo himself.
And those that Apaesus and Adasteia possess'd
And Pityeia and Tera's precipitous hill
Adrastus and linen-corsleted Amphius led,
Percotian Merops' sons, that was skill'd above all
In soothsaying craft, nor would suffer his children to go
To ruinous war, but their father they not a whit
Would obey, for the fates of death were leading them on.
And they that around Percota and Praction dwelt,
Abydos and Satos and lovely Arisba, were led
By Asius, Hyrtacus' son, a prince among men,
Asius Hyrtacides, whom his tall sorrel horses
Had brought from lovely Arisba by Selleis' stream.
The Pelasgian tribes, spear-arm'd, Hippothous led,
Men that in fertile Larissa dwelt for their home,
He and his brother Pylaeus, scion of Ares,
Sons of Pelasgian Lethus, Teutamus' son.
Acamas next and the hero Pirous led
The Thracians confin'd by the strong-flowing Hellespont
stream,
And Euphemus array'd the Ciconians, men of the spear,
The son of Troezen the son of Ceos was he.
Pyraechmes led Paeonians, arm'd with the bow,
From far Amydon by Axius' broad-flowing stream,
Axius, fairest of waters that move on the earth.
Pyleamenes next the Paphlagonians led
From the Enetan land where the wild-bred mule has his home,
The folk that around Cytorus and Sesamon dwell
And along Parthenius' stream fam'd settlements have,

Cromna and Aegialon and steep Erythina;
And the Alizones from Alyba, where silver has birth,
Odius these and Epistrophus marshall'd and led.
The Mysians Chromis and soothsaying Ennomus led,
Yet for all his auguries Ennomus warded not off
Black fate but was slain in the river by Aeacides
What time on the Trojans and others his havoc he wrought.
The Phrygians Phorcys and noble Ascanius led
From far Ascania, eager to fight in the press.
The Maeonians tribesmen Mesthles and Antiphus led,
Talaemenes' sons that were born of the Gygean mere,
And all the Maeonian folk under Tmolus they led.
And Nastes captain'd the Carians barbarous-tongued
That possess'd Miletus and Phthira's numberless oaks,
The Maeandrian streams and Mycale's towering crests;
Amphimachus these and Nastes led in their train,
Nomion's offspring, Nastes and Amphimachus,
He that in battle was deck'd in gold like a girl—
Fond fool! for from grievous death it avail'd not to save
But he fell by the hand of swift-footed Aeacides
In the river, and goodly Achilles his finery possess'd.
Sarpedon and blameless Glaucus the Lycians led
That dwell by eddying Xanthus in Lycia afar.

Paris and Menelaus meet in single combat; the defeated Paris is rescued by Aphrodite. Helen tells Priam of the exploits of the Achæan warriors.

Now when they were set in array, each host with its captain,
On came the Trojans with clangour and shouting, as birds come,

When mounts to the sky the clangorous note of the cranes
As they flee from the storms of winter and measureless rains
And with clangorous note to the streams of Ocean go winging,
To the Pigmy peoples bearing slaughter and death,
And at early dawn fell battle propose. But in silence
And breathing forth their fury marched the Achæans,
All eager at heart to give aid each man to the rest.
As a wind from the South upon hilltops pours out a mist,
To the shepherd a bane, but better than night to the thief,
And no further a man may see than a pebble is tossed;
Even as thickly the dust-cloud under their feet
Rose as they went and with speed hurried over the plain.
Now when they drew near to each other in mutual onset,
Chief of the Trojans stood forth Alexander the godlike,
With a panther-skin on his shoulders, a bended bow,
And a sword; a couple of bronze-headed spears he shook
And challenged the best of all the chieftains of Argos
In mortal combat to fight with him face to face.
But when Menelaus, beloved of Ares, had marked him
Parading before the assembly with lengthy strides,
Then, as a lion is glad that meets a great carcass,
When he finds an antler'd deer or a mountain goat
In his hunger; and ravening falls to devouring his prey,
Though the speeding hounds and the lusty youths set about him;

Even so Menelaus was glad to behold with his eyes
Alexander the godlike; for vengeance he thought to be his
On the sinful man; and, clad as he was in his armour,
From his chariot then straightway he leap'd to the ground.

But when Alexander the godlike beheld him appear
In the midst of the champions there, he was struck to the heart,

Shrinking back to the throng of his comrades, to keep from his fate.

As a man who has seen a snake in a glade of a mountain
Shrinks back, and his knees beneath him are taken with trembling,

And back he recoils, and pallor lays hold of his cheeks,
Even so shrank back to the throng of the Trojans
Alexander the godlike, such was his fear of Atrides.
But Hector, beholding him, tauntingly thus did revile him:
'Fell Paris, thou fair-looking seducer, mad for the women,
Would thou hadst never been born and hadst perished unwed.
Yea, that could I wish for, and better by far were it so
Than that thus thou shouldst be a reproach and sneered at by all.

The long-haired Achaeans, I reckon, are laughing aloud
To think that we have a prince for our champion only
For his handsome looks, though his heart lack courage and strength.

Didst thou, with a heart like that, gather trustworthy comrades,
And, sailing across the ocean in sea-going ships,
Mingle with strangers, bring back from a country afar
A woman most fair, to prove a sore bane to thy father,
To the city and all the people; a joy to thy foes,
But to thee thyself a hanging down of the head?
Wilt thou not bide Menelaus, beloved of Ares?
Thou mightest see what manner of warrior he is
Whose lovely wife thou art holding. Nought shall avail thee
Thy lyre then, nor the gifts of fair Aphrodite,
Neither locks nor beauty, when thou shalt mingle with dust.
The Trojans are surely but cravens, or long before this
For thine evil deeds thou hadst donned a garment of stone!'

Then in answer to him replied Alexander the godlike:
'Seeing, Hector, thou chidest me duly, and nothing beyond—
Thou hast ever a heart unyielding, like to an axe
That cleaves through a beam in the hands of a man as he shapes
The baulks of a ship by his skill, and his blow is made stronger;
Even as fearless the heart in thy breast. But in me
Tax not the lovable gifts of gold Aphrodite;
For not to be scorned are the glorious gifts of the Gods,
Which they give of themselves and which no man could have
for the wishing.

But now, if thy will is that I should do battle and fight,
Make the rest of the Trojans sit down, and all the Achaeans,
But place in the midst Menelaus, beloved of Ares,

And me, to do battle for Helen and all that is hers;
And let him that shall win and shall prove himself to be stronger
Take the woman and all that is hers and carry them home,
But all of the rest swear friendship and seal with slaughter
The pledges of that they have sworn. So you should remain
In rich-earth'd Troyland, and they to Argos return
Where horses are bred, and Achaea where women are fair.'
So spake he, and much rejoic'd Hector on hearing his speech;
And he went in the midst and restrain'd the ranks of the
Trojans,

Grasping his spear half-way; and all took a seat.
But the long-haired Achaeans kept aiming at him with their
arrows,

Kept shooting at him and seeking to hit him with stones.
But the ruler of men, Agamemnon, shouted aloud:
'Forbear, men of Argos; shoot not, young men of Achaea,
For the bright-helm'd Hector would seem to have somewhat to
say.'

So spake he, and they, giving over their fighting, at once
Fell silent; and Hector between the two companies spake:
'Ye Trojans and well-greav'd Achaeans, hear from my lips
What says Alexander, for whom this strife is arisen.
The rest of the Trojans and all the Achaeans he bids
Lay down on the bounteous earth their beautiful armour,
While, set in the midst, Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
And himself do battle for Helen and all that is hers;
And let him that shall win and shall prove himself to be stronger
Take the woman and all that is hers and carry them home,
But the rest swear friendship and seal with slaughter our oaths.'

So spake he, and all that were there became still and were
silent,

And among them spake Menelaus, fam'd for his war-cry:
'Listen now to me, for upon my heart above all
Has sorrow come; I deem that Achaeans and Trojans
Be sundered now, since many a woe you have suffered
For my quarrel's sake, and the cause of it all, Alexander.
And for whichsoever of us death and fate are decreed,
Dead let him be; but the rest of you quickly be sundered.
Bring two lambs, a white ram for the one, and one a black ewe,
For the Earth and the Sun; another for Zeus we will bring;
And hither fetch mighty Priam, to seal for himself
With slaughter his oath, for his sons are vaunting and faithless,
Lest any, transgressing, do wrong to the pledges of Zeus;
For the mind of youth tosses ever about in the air,

But an old man, whatever he deals with, looks backward and forward,

That for either side the outcome may be for the best.'

So spake he, and Trojans and Argives alike rejoic'd,
Hoping that they should have respite from sorrowful war;
So they drew up their horses in line and alighted themselves,
And put off their armour and laid it down on the ground,
Each close to each, with space but little between.
Then Hector sent into the city a couple of heralds,
To fetch the lambs with all speed and to summon Priam.
And the lord Agamemnon sent Talthylus forth
To the hollow ships, and bade him bring back a lamb;
Nor failed he to do the behest of the Great Agamemnon.
But Iris to white-arm'd Helen went on an errand
In the guise of the sister of him whom Helen had wed,
The wife of the son of Antenor, her that the son
Of Antenor, the lord Helicaon, took to his wife—
Laodice, fairest of all of the daughters of Priam.
In the hall she found her; a great purple web she was weaving,
Double of fold; and many a battle she broidered
Of the Trojans, lords of the horse, and the bronze-clad Achaeans,
That they for her sake at the hands of Ares had borne.
Then, standing beside her, thus spake the swift-footed Iris:
'Come hither, dear girl, to behold the wonderful deeds
Of the Trojans, lords of the horse, and the bronze-clad
Achaeans;

The men that of late in the plain, one side with the other,
Waged tearful war, with the deadly fray their desire,
Stay silent now, for the battle is over, reclin'd
On their shields, and near them their long spears thrust in the
ground.

But Paris will fight Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
With their long spears they will battle for thee; and whoever
Shall conquer, thou shalt be call'd the wife of his love.'
So spake the goddess, and set in her heart a sweet longing
For her husband of old, for the city and those who had borne
her;

And wrapping herself at once in a glittering veil
She went from her chamber in tears and tenderly wept.
Not alone went she, for two of her maids follow'd after—
With soft-eyed Clymene, Aethra, the daughter of Pittheus;
And swiftly to where the Scaean gates were they came.
And those that with Priam were, with Panthöus, Thymoetes,
and Lampus,

With Clytius and with him Hicateon, offspring of Ares,
 Ucalegon and Antenor, both fill'd with the spirit of wisdom,
 Over the Scaean gates as elders were seated.
 Gone were the days of their fighting, for now they were old,
 But goodly speakers they were, and like the cicalas
 That, perched on a tree in the woods, utter notes lily-soft;
 So sat on the tower wall the chiefs of the Trojans.
 Now when they beheld how Helen came up to the tower,
 Softly they spake winged words the one to the other: ✓
 'No blame to the Trojans it is, nor the well-greav'd Achaeans
 That they for a woman like this should long suffer woes;
 To a Goddess immortal dread likeness is hers to the sight.
 Yet, such though she be, away in the ships let her go
 And not linger our bane and a bane to our children to come.'
 So they said, but Priam call'd Helen and spake to her thus:
 'Come hither, dear child, and sit thou before me, to see
 Thy husband of yore, the folk of thy kin, and thy friends—
 'Tis not thou art to blame, as I think, the blame is the Gods',
 Who stirred up against me the tearful war of the Argives—
 So tell me the name of this mighty warrior here,
 And who he may be, this Achaean so goodly and tall.
 Others there are more tall by as much as a head,
 But never so handsome a man have I seen with my eyes,
 Nor so royal a one; he is like to a man that is King.'
 Then in answer to him spake Helen, fair among women:
 'Dear sire of my lord, thou art dread to me, dread and rever'd;
 Would I had chosen fell death, when hither thy son
 I follow'd, forsaking my bridal bower, my kinsmen,
 My daughter, my sweet, and the lovely friends of my girlhood—
 But that never came, so that now I am wasted with tears.
 Yet this will I tell thee, for which thou dost question and ask:
 'Tis Atrides yonder, the far-realm'd lord Agamemnon,
 Both a noble king and a mighty hand at the spear,
 And brother of him that I wedded he was to me,
 To shameless me, as surely as ever man was.'
 So she spake, and the old man marvelled at him, and he said:
 'O blest son of Atreus, fortune's child, heaven-gifted,
 Many youths of Achaea, I see, are under thy rule;
 To Phrygia, land of the vine, have I fared before now
 And there seen the Phrygian warriors in many a throng
 With their dappled steeds; men of Otreus and Mygdon divine,
 That along the banks of Sangarius then lay encamp'd;
 For I too was counted among them, being their ally,
 On the day when the Amazons came, a match for the men;

But fewer they were, even they, than the bright-eyed Achaeans.
And next the old man saw Odysseus there, and he asked:
'And that man yonder, dear child? Come, say who he is;
By a head he is shorter than Atreus' son, Agamemnon,
But broader of shoulder and broader of chest to behold.
On the bounteous earth his armour is laid, but himself
Through the ranks of the armed men like a bell-wether ranges;
Yea, like a heavy-fleec'd ram he seems to my sight,
That through a great flock of white ewes makes way for himself.'

Then in answer to him spake Helen, the daughter of Zeus:
'Tis Odysseus this time, yonder, the son of Laertes;
In the rock-bound kingdom of Ithaca came he to manhood,
And he knows all manner of guile and crafty device.'

Then in answer to her the wise Antenor replied:
'Lady, indeed it is true, the word thou hast spoken,
For hither came once the noble Odysseus, and with him
Menelaus, beloved of Ares, as envoys for thee.
It was I that received them and made them at home in my halls,
And the ways of them both I learned, and their crafty devices;
For when with the Trojans they mingled, all gathered together,
Menelaus o'ertopped all men by the breadth of his shoulders,
When all were standing; yet, both being seated, Odysseus
Had a kinglier mien; but when before all they began
Weaving the web of counsel and words, Menelaus
Made a flowing speech, though not long, but clearly he spake,
Being given neither to lengthy address nor to rambling,
Though younger in years of the two. But whenever Odysseus
Of many devices arose, he would stand in his place
And lower his gaze, with his eyes kept fix'd to the ground,
And mov'd his staff neither backward nor forward, but held it
Unmoving still, like a man that is simple in mind;
A furious oaf you would think him, and nought but a fool;
But whenever he utter'd that mighty voice from his chest,
And words like the flutter of snow on a winter's day,
Then could no mortal beside compare with Odysseus;
Then at the sight of Odysseus our wonder was less.'
And thirdly the old man saw Ajax there, and he ask'd:
'Who is this, then, this other Achaean, doughty and tall,
With his head and the breadth of his shoulders o'ertopping the
Argives?'

Then answered him long-robed Helen, fair among women;
'That is Ajax the mighty, the bulwark of the Achaeans;
And opposite stands Idomeneus, like to a God,
In the Cretan host; their captains are gathered about him.

Him many a time Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
Made free of our house, whenever he journey'd from Crete.
And now I can see all the rest of the bright-eyed Achaeans,
And well could I mind them and give thee the names of them
all;

But two can I not see of those that marshal the host,
Polydeuces, skilled with his fists, and Castor the horseman,
Own brothers of mine, by the selfsame mother begotten.
Either they followed not on from fair Lacedaemon,
Or follow'd indeed, coming hither in sea-going ships,
But now are unwilling to enter the warriors' fray,
For fear of the shame and the many taunts that are mine.'
So spake she; but them at that time in the life-giving earth
Lacedaemon covered, the land of their birth and their love.

Now the heralds meanwhile about the city were bearing
The offerings due for the sacred oath of the gods,
Two lambs and heart-warming wine, the fruit of the earth,
In a goatskin bottle; a bowl all shining it was
That the herald Idaeus was bearing, and gold were the cups.
He came to the old man's side, and, rousing him, said:
'Thou son of Laomedon, rise; thou art call'd by the captains
Of the Trojans, lords of the horse, and the bronze-clad
Achaeans,

To go down to the plain, to seal with slaughter thine oath.
But with long spears Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
And eke Alexander will fight for the sake of the woman;
Let the woman and all that is hers follow after the victor,
But we others shall swear to keep friendship, sealing with
slaughter

The pledges of that we have sworn; so we should remain
In rich-earth'd Troyland, and they to Argos return
Where horses are bred, and Achaea where women are fair.'
So he spake, and the old man shuddered, and those in his train
Bade yoke up the horses; and speedily did they obey.
Then up mounted Priam and backward drew he the reins,
While Antenor beside him mounted the beauteous car;
And they drove the swift steeds through the Scaean gates to
the plain.

But when they drew near to the Trojans and near the Achaeans,
They stepp'd from the chariot on to the beauteous earth
And into the midst of the Trojans and Argives they went.
Then straightway arose the ruler of men, Agamemnon,
And Odysseus of many devices; together were brought
By the lordly heralds the offerings due for the swearing

Of the solemn oath of the gods; they mingled the wine
In the bowl, and poured water over the princes' hands.
Then out of its place Agamemnon his dagger drew forth,
That ever did hang by the mighty sheath of his sword,
And cut hair from the heads of the lambs, which the heralds
apportion'd,

To the chiefs of the Trojans a part, and part to the Argives.
Then aloud, with his hands uplifted, pray'd Agamemnon:
'Father Zeus, whose rule is from Ida, most honoured and great,
And thou, Sun, that all things beholdest and all things dost
hear,

Ye streams and thou earth, and ye that below give to vengeance
Men parted from life, if any untruly have sworn:
Our witnesses be ye, and guard our pledges of faith.
If now Alexander deliver to death Menelaus,
Let him be the one to have Helen and all that is hers,
And we in our sea-going ships away will betake us;
But if golden-hair'd Alexander slay Menelaus,
Let the Trojans surrender Helen and all that is hers,
And pay to the Argive host such fitting amends
As shall stay in the minds of men that are yet to be.
But if Priam and with him his sons, though Paris should fall,
Be unwilling to pay me the recompense that is due,
I will battle on, to win the requital of sin,
And here will I stay, till I meet with an ending of war.'

So he spake, and with pitiless bronze cut the throats of the
lambs,
And laid them gasping down on the ground, with their breath
Ebbing away; for the bronze had taken their strength.
Then, drawing into the cups the wine from the bowl,
They pour'd it forth, and pray'd to the gods ever-living;
And thus would say many a man, both Achaeon and Trojan:
'O Zeus most honoured and great, and all of you other
Immortal Gods, which side soever of us
Shall ponder some harm, denying this oath that we swear,
Let their brains be poured on the ground, both theirs and their
children's,

As this wine is poured, and their wives serve alien men.'
So spake they; but Zeus not yet would grant them fulfilment.
Then Priam, the son of Dardanus, spake in their midst:
'Hearken to me, ye Trojans and well-greav'd Achaeans:
Back will I go to wind-swept Ilios, seeing
I cannot endure to behold the son of my love
Striving against Menelaus, beloved of Ares.

But Zeus knows, and all the Immortals, the rest of the Gods,
For which of the two is decreed the ending of death.'
So spake he, the godlike man, and, laying the lambs
In the chariot, mounted himself, and drew back the reins,
While Antenor beside him mounted the beauteous car;
And back into Ilios both of them wended their way.
But Hector, the son of Priam, and goodly Odysseus
First measured a space, and then, taking lots, in a helm
Of bronze they shook them, to settle which of the two
Should first let fly his spear of bronze in the air.
And the people pray'd, uplifting their hands upon high;
And thus would say many a man, both Achaeon and Trojan:
'Father Zeus, whose rule is from Ida, most honoured and great;
Whiche'er of the two have brought these toils on us both,
Grant he may die and enter the dwelling of Hades,
But for us be friendship and sacred pledges of faith.'
So spake they, and Hector the great, the glittering helm'd,
Gave the helmet a shake, with his eyes turned backward the
while;

And the lot of Paris came leaping speedily forth.
Then in rows they sat them down, where the high-stepping
horses

Of every man stood, and where rested his armour inlaid.

But divine Alexander, the lord of fair-tressed Helen,
About his shoulders put on his beautiful armour.
First on his legs he fasten'd a pair of greaves,
Beautiful greaves, and fitted with anklets of silver;
Next after these he arm'd his chest with a breastplate,
His brother Lycaon's, and fitted it on to himself.
And he cast about his shoulders a sword of bronze
With silver studs, then his buckler sturdy and large,
And he plac'd on his mighty head a well-fashioned helm
With a horsehair plume that terribly nodded above;
And a valorous spear he chose, that suited his hold.
So too Menelaus the warlike dress'd for the fray.
But when upon either side of the throng they were arm'd,
Into the space between Trojans and Argives they strode.
Grimly they glar'd, and those that beheld were amaz'd,
Both the Trojans, lords of the horse, and the well-greav'd
Achaeans.

In the measured space they stood, each close to the other,
Shaking their adverse spears in mutual hate.

First Alexander his long-shadow'd javelin hurled
And it smote on the shield of Atrides, on all sides equal;

But never a breach made the bronze, for the point was turned
In the strong-made shield. Next, Atreus' son, Menelaus,
Charg'd with his spear, invoking thus Father Zeus:
'Grant me vengeance, King Zeus, on him that first did me
wrong,

The great Alexander, and humble him under my hands,
That many a man of those that are yet to be born
May shrink to do harm to his host, that has shewn himself
friend.'

He spake, and poisoning his long-shadow'd spear, let it fly,
And it smote on the shield of Paris, on all sides equal;
Through the gleaming shield did it enter, the mighty spear,
Through the graven breastplate too did it force a way
And straight by his thigh the spear made a rent in his kilt;
But he swerv'd aside and escap'd the darkness of death.
Then drew Menelaus his sword with the silver studs,
And, reaching on high, smote the ridge of the helm. But
upon it

In three, nay, four did it break and fell from his hand.

Then wail'd Menelaus, his eyes to the stretch of the sky:
'Father Zeus, no crueller God is of all Gods than thou;
I deemed that my vengeance had come for the sinning of Paris,
But broken is now my sword in my hand, and in vain
My spear flown out of my grasp, and he is unhurt.'
Saying this, he leaped on him, seizing him fast by the helm
With its tuft of horsehair; and whirling him round, he began
To drag him towards the well-greav'd Achaeans. But Paris,
Chok'd by the broider'd strap at his delicate neck,
Drawn tightly beneath his chin to fasten his helm,
Away had been dragg'd by Atrides, who thus would have won
Inexpressible fame, had the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite,
Quickly espying, not rent asunder the strap,
Cut from the hide of an ox laid mightily low;
And the helm in his vigorous hand came empty away.
He swung it aloft and towards the well-greav'd Achaeans
Toss'd it; his faithful companions gathered it up.
But himself sprang back again, eager to slay his opponent
With his spear of bronze. But lo, Aphrodite with ease
(As a goddess may) snatched Paris away and enwrapp'd him
In darkness of air, thereafter setting him down
In his chamber, high-vaulted and fragrant; herself she departed
To summon Helen. Aloft on the height of the tower
She found her, encompass'd with throngs of the women of Troy.
Then, laying her hand on her scented raiment, she twitched it,

And spake to her, taking the guise of an elderly dame,
A wool-comber, who, when her home was yet Lacedaemon,
Would card her the beauteous wool, and was deep in her love.
In this woman's likeness it was Aphrodite address'd her:
'Come here; Alexander is calling for thee to go home;
On his inlaid couch in his chamber he lies, agleam
With beauty and lovely apparel. Thou never wouldst think
He had come from fighting a foe, but off to the dance
Thou wouldst think he were going, or fresh from the dance to
be resting.'

So spake she, and Helen's heart she stirred in her breast;
So when she mark'd the lovely neck of the goddess,
Her breasts of desire, and the sparkling light of her eyes,
She was seized with amazement, and speaking thus she address'd her:

'O wondrous lady, why seekest thou thus to beguile me?
Yet further, forsooth, wilt thou lead me on, to some city
Well-peopled, in Phrygian land or Maeonia fair,
If haply thou hast there some mortal dear to thy heart;
Since now Menelaus has conquer'd the great Alexander,
And his will is to take me—hateful me—to his home.
For this art thou now come hither, deceit in thy heart.
Go now and sit by his side, leave the ways of the Gods,
And let thy feet never carry thee back to Olympus,
But still let him be thy care and be thou his defence,
Until he make thee his wife, or perchance his slave.
But thither I will not go—most shameful it were—
To make ready his bed. The women of Troy shall hereafter
Blame me. But I in my heart have griefs without end.'

Then fair Aphrodite, kindled to wrath, thus addressed her:
'Provoke me not, rash one, lest I in my anger forsake thee
And hate thee as now I do hold thee surpassingly dear,
And lest between both I devise sore hate, between Argives
And Trojans alike, and thou die a horrible death.'

So spake she, and Helen, the daughter of Zeus, was afraid;
And wrapping herself in a mantle of glittering white,
She went in silence, and none of the women of Troy
Saw that she pass'd, with the Goddess leading the way.
Now when to the beautiful dwelling of Paris they came,
At once did her maids set about their duties: but she,
The fair among women, repair'd to a high-vaulted chamber.
And divine Aphrodite, the lover of mirth, took a chair
And, fetching it, set it before Alexander. Thereon
Did Helen, the daughter of shield-bearing Zeus, sit her down

With her eyes averted, and thus upbraided her lord:
'Thou art back from the war; and would that there thou hadst
perish'd

Overcome by a valiant man, my husband of yore.
Thou madest it once thy boast Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
Was weaker than thou in his grip and the might of his spear.
But go now, call out Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
Singly against thee once more to do battle. But nay,
I, Helen, bid thee desist, and not to go warring
Against golden-hair'd Menelaus, nor fight him again
In thy folly, lest haply thou speedily fall to his spear.'

Then Paris in answer to her spake thus in his turn:
'Vex not my heart, O lady, with bitter reproach;
Though now Menelaus have won, with the help of Athene,
'Twill be I the next time; on our side too there are Gods.
But come, on the couch of love let us take our delight,
For never before did longing so compass my soul
Not even the time when first I snatch'd thee away
From fair Lacedaemon, and sailed in the sea-going ships
And on Cranae's isle and the couch of love did possess thee,
As I love thee now and with sweet desire am enthrall'd.'
Saying this, he led the way couchward; his wife follow'd after.
So the two of them laid them down on a corded bed;
But the son of Atreus wander'd among the throng
As a beast does, hither and thither, in hopes that his eyes
Might somewhere glimpse in the crowd Alexander the godlike.
But of all the Trojan host and their famous allies
Not a man could shew Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
Where lay Alexander—not that they hid him away
For the love they bore him, could any there but have seen him,
For as darksome death is, hated of all men was he.
Then spake thus among them the ruler of men, Agamemnon:
'Hear me, O Trojans, and you, Dardanians, hearken;
Hear me, allies: Menelaus, beloved of Ares,
Is plainly the victor; give up, then, Helen of Argos,
And her chattels with her, and make such fitting amends
As shall stay in the minds of men that are yet to be!'
So Atrides spake; the Achaeans shouted assent.

Menelaus is wounded by Pandarus. Details of the fighting. Agamemnon exhorts the chieftains to battle.

BUT the Gods on the golden floor sat holding debate
 In the presence of Zeus, and the lady Hebe was there
 Pouring their nectar, and they in their goblets of gold
 Pledg'd one another and gaz'd on the city of Troy;
 And among them Cronian Zeus in malice of heart
 With taunting words made trial of Hera and spake:
 'Two helpers, ye Gods, has King Menelaus in heav'n,
 Argive Hera and Alalcomenean Athena,
 Yet here they are sitting at ease and take their delight
 In watching from far, while light-of-love Aphrodite
 Stands ever at Paris's side to defend him from doom
 And now, when he look'd but to perish, has sav'd him alive.
 Yet surely to brave Menelaus the victory belongs;
 Let us then debate on the issue how it shall be,
 Whether evil hate and the dreadful war-cry again
 We shall wake or between these peoples friendship ordain.
 If this be your will and my counsel be pleasing to all,
 Then Priam's city may yet be a dwelling for men
 And King Menelaus may take back Helen his wife.'

He spake, and Athena and Hera murmur'd thereat
 Where they sat by each other and ill for the Trojans devis'd.
 Now Athena brooded in silence and said not a word
 For all her anger, and fierce was her anger indeed,
 But Hera's heart contain'd not her wrath, and she spake:
 'Dread son of Cronos, what word is this thou hast said?
 How canst thou make my labour fruitless and vain,
 The sweat that I sweated, the toil that my horses endur'd
 When I gather'd the host to afflict King Priam and his sons?
 Do as thou wilt, but we others shall noway approve.'
 And here did the Cloud-compeller in anger address:
 'Good lady, what grievance hast thou against Priam the King
 Or Priam's sons, that thou burnest so furiously
 And Ilion's well-built city wilt raze to the ground?
 Couldst thou but enter her gates and her girdle of walls
 And of Priam and his sons and his people make thee a meal
 Devouring them raw, then mightst thou thy anger assuage!

Have then thy will, but let not this quarrel again
Hereafter embitter between us contention and strife;
One thing more will I say, do thou lay it to heart:
Whenever I too shall be minded some city to sack
And raze to the ground, whose people are dear to thy heart,
Think not to thwart my anger but give me my way
As freely as I do to thee, tho' loath in my heart.
For of all the cities that mortal men upon earth
Inhabit under the sun and the star-spangled heav'n
Holy Ilion I honour'd the most in my heart
And Priam and Priam's people of the good ashen spear,
For never has lack'd on my altar the generous feast,
Libation or sacrifice either, the dues of the Gods.'
And him did great-eyed Hera in answer address:
'Three cities there are that to me are dear above all,
Argos and Sparta and Mycene's wide-streeted town,
These mayst thou waste whensoever thy hatred they rouse,
These will I champion not nor grudge them to thee;
For even tho' jealous I be and their ruin forbid
'Twould nothing avail me, seeing thou art stronger by far.
Yet my work also its due fulfilment must have;
I too am a God and my lineage even as thine
And Cronos begat me, of all his daughters the chief
By birthright alike and because thy wife I am call'd
And thou among all the Immortals art greatest and King.
Then surely 'tis meet that we yield to each other herein,
And all the other Immortals will follow our lead;
Do thou then speedily charge Athena to go
'Mid the battle-din of the Trojan and Danaan hosts
And essay how the Trojans, o'erweening, violence shall do
To the proud triumphing Achaeans, in spite of their oaths.'

So spake he, and stirr'd Athena, tho' eager herself,
And down from the peaks of Olympus she darted her way,
And ev'n as the son of Cronos a meteor sends,
To sailors or wide-capp'd warriors a portent to be,
And brightly it gleams and sparks in multitudes shoots,
E'en so came Pallas Athena rushing to earth
And leapt in their midst, and amazement seiz'd on them all,
Horse-taming Trojans and well-greav'd Achaeans alike,
And thus, as he look'd at his neighbour, said many a one:
'Now evil war and the dreadful war-cry again
Shall waken, or Zeus between us shall stablsh a peace,
E'en he that rules and disposes the battles of men.'
So would one say in the Trojan and Danaan hosts,

But the Goddess, in form like a warrior, stalwart in fight,
Antenor's son Laodicus, enter'd the throng,
If haply godlike Pandarus there he might find;
And she found the son of Lycaon, noble and strong,
Standing midmost the ranks of the shield-bearing men
That had come in his train from Aesopus' well-water'd vale,
And, halting beside him, in winged words to him spake:
'Wise son of Lycaon, 'twere well thou shouldst hearken to me;
Only take courage a swift-flying arrow to shoot
At King Menelaus, and favour and fame thou mayst win
Of all the Trojans and chiefly of Paris the prince.
He will be first to enrich thee with gifts above price
If he see Menelaus, Atreus' warrior son,
Brought to the funeral pyre by an arrow of thine.
Shoot then, and slay Menelaus, that glorious King,
And vow to Apollo, the Light-born, Lord of the bow,
An offering of yearling lambs, a hecatomb meet,
The day thou returnest to holy Zeleia thy home.'

Athena spake, and his fool's heart gladly obey'd,
And straightway he drew from its sheath his well-polish'd bow,
Horn of an ibex that once he had shot in the breast
As it stepp'd from a rock, where ambush'd he waited for it,
And had pierc'd to the heart, and backward it fell on the rock;
Sixteen palms were the towering horns on its brow,
And the worker in horn their bosses cunningly join'd
At the handle, and polish'd them well and tipp'd them with
gold.

Now Pandarus strung it by resting an end on the ground
And his comrades meanwhile defended him, raising their
shields,

Lest the warrior sons of Achaea should set upon him
Ere Atreus' son Menelaus were smitten and slain.
And opening the lid of his quiver an arrow he chose
Unshot, well-feather'd, freighted with death-bearing pangs;
And the bitter arrow he straightway laid on the string
And vow'd to light-born Apollo, Lord of the bow,
An offering of yearly lambs, a hecatomb meet,
The day he return'd to holy Zeleia his home.

Then clutch'd he the notch and the string of sinew in one
And drew the string to his breast and the barb to the bow,
And, soon as the mighty bow to a circle had bent,
The horn clang'd and the string sang loud and the shaft
Leapt forward, eager to wing its way 'mid the throng.
But the blessed Gods, the immortal ones, Menelaus,

Were not unmindful of thee; and chief above all
The daughter of Zeus, the driver of spoil, who stood
Thy bulwark, and turn'd the biting arrow aside.
She dash'd it away from thy flesh, as a mother dashes
A fly from her child when it lies in slumbering sweetness.
Herself she guided its path, where the golden hooks
Of the belt were clasp'd and were met by the double breastplate.
On the fasten'd belt it lighted, the piercing shaft,
Through the fine-wrought belt was it driven; it forc'd a way
E'en through the graven breastplate, e'en through the kilt
Which he wore as a shield for his flesh, a defence from arrows,
And which guarded him best; yet even through this did it go,
For the arrow scarr'd his outermost flesh; and at once
There pour'd out blood from the wound in a livid stream.
As a Carian woman, or one from Maeonia, stains
Some ivory scarlet, to make her a horse's cheek-piece,
And stor'd in her chamber it lies, though many a horseman
Begs it to wear—but it lies there to grace a king,
For his horse an adornment, a badge of fame for the driver—
So thy shapely thighs were all stain'd with blood, Menelaus,
Stain'd were thy legs and the graceful ankles beneath them.
Then shuddering seiz'd Agamemnon, ruler of men,
When he saw the blood flow dark from the place of the wound;
And shudder'd himself Menelaus, of Ares belov'd.
But, seeing the thew and the barbs yet clear of the flesh,
Back to his breast was his spirit gather'd again.
But surely lamented the lord Agamemnon, as, holding
Menelaus fast by the hand, he spake thus among them,
While his comrades also lamented: 'O dear my brother,
For thy death it was, so it seems, that I seal'd with slaughter
The treaty, and set thee in battle alone with the Trojans
For the Danaan host; since they have struck thee, the Trojans,
And trodden beneath their feet the pledge of their faith.
Yet never is oath sworn vainly, never in vain
Is the blood of lambs and wine unallay'd with water,
And the clasping of two right hands, wherein we had trusted.
Though now the Olympian wreak not at once his vengeance,
He shall wreak it at last, and men shall pay for it dearly,
Yea, with their very heads, their wives and their children.
For this do I know for sure, in my heart and my soul:
There shall come a day that shall see blest Ilion perish,
And with Priam the people of Priam of good ashen spear;
For the son of Cronos, Zeus, who dwells in the heavens,
From his throne upon high shall himself shake over them all

His darksome shield, in wrath at this falseness of theirs.
Truly these things shall time not fail to accomplish;
But oh, Menelaus, on me grim sorrow shall come,
If thou, fulfilling the span of thy life, shalt die.
Scorn'd above all should I back to waterless Argos,
For at once the Achaeans will think of the land of their birth,
And to Priam should we leave, and leave to the Trojans
Their boast, Helen of Argos. As for thy bones,
The earth shall rot them as here thou liest in Troyland,
Thy task foil'd of its end; and thus, as I think,
Shall many a Trojan say in his vaunting pride,
As he stamps on the burial-heap of renown'd Menelaus:
"So may Atrides in all things his anger fulfil
As now he has led his Achaeans to Troyland for naught
For behold! he is gone to his home, the land that he loves,
With his ships unladen, and left Menelaus behind."
When so men speak, let the earth gape wide to receive me.'
But with words of cheer Menelaus address'd him and spake:
'Take heart, and affright not in aught the Danaan host;
It touch'd not a mortal spot, for the glittering belt
And the kirtled mail underneath protected my life
And, inmost, the taslet of bronze that the coppersmiths
wrought.'

And him did lord Agamemnon in answer address:
'So may it be, my dear Menelaus, but yet
Shall a leech look over the wound and plaster thereon
Salves that shall ease thee the darksome pain of the hurt.'
He spake and his squire, Talthybius, straightway address'd:
'Talthybius, call thou Machaon hither with speed,
The hero son of the wise leech Asclepius,
To see Menelaus, Atreus' warrior son,
Whom now some Trojan or Lycian, in archery skill'd,
Has wounded—a glory to him, to Achaeans a grief.'
He spake, and his squire Talthybius heeded his word
And started to go through the host of bronze-clad Achaeans
To spy out the hero Machaon, and found him anon
Standing midmost the ranks of the shield-bearing men
That from Trica, pasture of horses, had come in his train;
And he stood at his side and in winged words to him spake:
'Arise, Asclepius' son, Agamemnon the King
Calls thee to see Menelaus, shepherd of men,
Whom now some Trojan or Lycian, in archery skill'd,
Has wounded—a glory to him, to Achaeans a grief.'
So saying, Machaon's spirit he stirr'd in his breast,

And up through the widespread host of Achaea they went
And found gold-hair'd Menelaus where wounded he lay
In the circle of Danaan chieftains that gather'd around,
And the hero enter'd the ring and knelt at his side
And drew out the arrow at once from the clasp of the belt,
And, ev'n as he drew it, the barbs were broken aback;
Then loos'd he the glittering belt and the kirtle of mail
And, inmost, the taslet of bronze that the coppersmiths
wrought.

And, searching the wound where the keen-barb'd arrow had
struck,

He suck'd out the blood and over it, wise in his art,
He spread such healing simples as Cheiron of old
Had made his father a gift of, in kindness of heart.

While thus with brave Menelaus they busied themselves,
In the meantime the ranks of the shield-arm'd Trojans came on,
And the Argives arm'd once more and remember'd the fray.
Then godlike lord Agamemnon shouldst thou not see
A slumbering or cowering King or unready to fight
But eager to enter the battle, the glory of men.
His horses he left and his chariot figur'd with bronze,
And these his squire Eurymedon, Ptolemy's son
That was son of Pireus, held snorting, apart on the field;
But he straitly charg'd him to have them ready to hand
When weariness came on his limbs with ordering the host.
So he on foot through the ranks of warriors ranged
And whomso he found of the swift-hors'd Danaan men
Eager for battle, with words of cheer he address'd:
'Ye Argives, now your impetuous valour recall,
For Father Zeus no helper of liars will be;
But, seeing they were first to wrong us, in spite of their oaths,
So surely their tender flesh shall the vultures devour
And their dear wives and their little children shall we
Carry away in our ships when their wall we have storm'd.'
But whomso he saw that were laggards in dolorous war
These with speeches of wrath would he bitterly chide:
'Braves of the bow, our reproach, where now is your shame?
Why stand ye like this, bewilder'd and helpless as fawns
That are tired with the long chase over the limitless plain
And stupidly stand, with no spirit left in their hearts?
So stand ye affrighted and daz'd, and fight not at all.
Would ye linger here till the Trojans nearer approach
Your good ships' sterns, where they stand by the edge of the sea,
To see if Cronion will shield you and stretch out his arm?'

So ranged he the ranks of his warriors masterfully,
And first, as he went through the throng, to the Cretans he came
Where these round wise Idomeneus arm'd for the fray:
Brave as a boar Idomeneus marshall'd their front
While Meriones the hindermost urg'd to the charge,
And the King of men, Agamemnon, rejoic'd when he saw
And straightway with kindly words to Idomeneus spake:
'Idomeneus, thee among all the Danaan Knights
Do I honour the most both in war and in peacefuller tasks
And whenso the Argive chieftains sit at the feast
And mix in the bowl the bright-hearted communal wine:
There all the rest of the long-hair'd Achaeans may drink
The allotted cup, but thine stands, even as mine,
Fill'd to the brim to drink of whenever thou list,
Now rouse thee to war and be such as thou boastest of old.'

And him did the Cretan chieftain in answer address:
'Atrides, thy trusty comrade still will I be
Ev'n as I promis'd at first when I gave thee my pledge;
But do thou all the rest of the long-hair'd Achaeans arouse
That the fight may be speedy, seeing that the Trojans their
oaths

Have broken; yet death and sorrow their portion shall be
Because they were first to wrong us in spite of their oaths.'
He spake, and Atrides left him, rejoicing at heart,
And next the Ajaxes found, as he went through the throng,
Arming, and round them a cloud of footmen array'd.
As when from his lookout a goatherd watches a cloud
Advancing over the deep 'neath the blast of the West,
And it seems in the distance even blacker than pitch
As it comes up the sea and a whirlwind brings in its train,
And he shudders to see it and drives his flock to a cave,
E'en so round the Ajaxes serried battalions mov'd,
Young warriors foster'd of Zeus, into furious war,
Dark as a cloud and bristling with shields and with spears:
And the high King, Lord Agamemnon, to see them was glad
And, uttering his voice, in winged words to them spake:
'Ye Ajaxes, captains of bronze-mail'd Danaan men,
You it beseems not to urge and I give you no charge
For yourselves your countrymen bid to do battle amain;
O Zeus and Athena and Phoebus! would it might be
That such were the warlike spirit in every breast,
Then should the city of Priam bow to the dust,
Captive and broken and sack'd 'neath our conquering hand.'
So saying, he left them there and to others was gone,

And Nestor, the clear-voic'd Pylian spokesman, he found
Arraying his comrades and spurring them on to the fight,
And their captains Pelegon, Alastor, and Chromius were
And princely Haemon and Bias, shepherd of men.
Now first the horsemen he marshall'd with chariot and horse,
And behind them battalions of footmen, many and brave,
A bulwark in battle, but cowards he set in the midst
Where each of them must, though loath, of necessity fight.
First laid he charge on the horsemen; them did he bid
Hold in their horses nor tangled be in the throng,
'Nor let any, trusting his horsecraft and manhood, be bold
In front of his comrades or singly to fight with the foe,
Nor yet give him ground, for thence comes weakness to all.
But whenso one from his chariot can come at his man
Let him take good aim with his spear, for so ye shall thrive;
Thus did the captains of old take cities and walls,
And such was the thought and the spirit that ruled in their
breast.'

So cheer'd them the old man, skill'd in warfare of yore,
And the high King, Lord Agamemnon, to see him was glad
And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
'Old man, would that, as now is thy spirit within,
Such were thy limbs, and thy strength unabated might be!
Old age ('tis the general lot) lies heavy on thee;
Would that some other were old and that youth were for thee!'
And the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, answer'd and said:
'Atrides, I too could wish to be now as I was
On the day that I slew the hero, Ereuthalion,
But to no man give the Immortals all things at once:
As then I was young, old age must attend on me now.
Yet, notwithstanding, the horsemen I tend and support
With counsel and speech, for that is the right of the old,
And the younger shall fight with the spear, the warriors with
thews
More youthful than I, that have trust in the strength of their
hands.'

He spake, and Atrides left him, rejoicing at heart,
And next found Peteus' son, the charioteer
Menestheus, standing 'midst the Athenian men,
And Odysseus of many devices not far from his side
Midmost the ranks of the stout Cephallenian folk,
All standing and waiting to hear the battle alarm
For the Trojan and Danaan hosts on this side and that
Had but just bestirr'd them to move; so waiting they stood

To see some other Achaean squadron advance
 To assail the enemy's line and the battle begin.
 And seeing them King Agamemnon upbraided the chiefs
 And, uttering his voice, in winged words to them spake:
 'Menestheus, thou son of Peteus foster'd of Zeus,
 And thou, so cunning of mind, thou master of guile,
 Why stand ye cowering apart and the others await?
 'Tis yours 'mong the foremost fighters to stand in your place
 And the fiery front of the battle go forward and meet;
 Ye two are ever the first my summons to hear
 When the sons of Achaea prepare for the elders a feast,
 Then it is ever your joy to eat of the roast
 And quaff the honey-sweet wine as long as ye list,
 And now your joy it would be ten squadrons to see
 Of Achaeans in front of you fighting with pitiless steel.'

And, louting upon him, Odysseus address'd him and said:
 'Atrides, what word has escap'd the fence of thy teeth?
 No laggards are we whenever the arms of Achaea
 Wake 'gainst the horse-taming Trojans the fury of war;
 Thou shalt see, if thou wilt and if these things touch thee at all,
 Telemachus' father at grips in the front of the fight
 With the horse-taming Trojans. Thy saying is empty as air.'
 And him with a smile the Lord Agamemnon address'd,
 Seeing him angry, and took back his words of rebuke:
 'Heav'n-born son of Laertes, wary Odysseus,
 Naught will I say over measure to chide thee or cheer:
 Well know I the steadfast spirit that rules in thy breast
 And thy gentle wisdom; thy thoughts are even as mine.
 Peace! for the word ill-spoken amends shall be made
 Hereafter; may God make it null, mere wind that has blown.'
 So spake he, and left them there and to others was gone,
 And high-hearted Diomed, son of Tydeus, he found
 Where amongst his horses and well-fram'd chariot he stood,
 And beside him standing Sthenelus, Capaneus' son.
 Him when he saw did Lord Agamemnon rebuke
 And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
 'Ay me, thou son of Tydeus, tamer of horses,
 Why cowerest thou gazing thus o'er the highways of war?
 Not so was thy father Tydeus wonted to cower
 But far in front of his comrades to fight with the foe,
 Or so they said that beheld him; for never did I
 Meet him or see, but they say that he shone above all.
 Once he came to Mycene, tho' not as a foe,
 With his friend the great Polynices, levying arms

For the war that they made on the holy fortress of Thebes,
And they begg'd the Achæan stalwarts allies to lend
And our folk were fain to assent and had granted them help
If Zeus had not turn'd their intent with omens of ill.
So they from Mycene departed and came on their way
As far as the reedy Asopus that couches in grass,
And the noble Tydeus they then on an embassy sent
To bastion'd Thebes, and the sons of Cadmus he found
Holding feast in the palace of Steocles.

Then was the knightly Tydeus quite unafraid
Tho' a stranger he was and among those many alone
And dared them to feats of prowess and won every match
With ease, so present a help was Athena to him.
And the sons of Cadmus, goaders of horses, were wroth,
And as homeward he journey'd a close-set ambush they laid,
The fifty best of their youth, whose leaders were two,
Maeon the son of Haemon, a peer of the Gods,
And Antiphonus' son Polyphontes, staunch in a fight;
But Tydeus a shameful death wreak'd even on these,
Slaying them all, save one that he sent back to Thebes,
(Maeon it was) obeying the signs from the Gods.

Such was Aetolian Tydeus; begat he a son
That is worse in battle, tho' better he be with his tongue?'

So spake he, and stalwart Diomed said not a word,
Abash'd when he heard the rebuke of his sovereign rever'd;
But glorious Capaneus' son made answer and said:
'Speak thou not falsehood, O King, that must utter the truth;
'Tis we that our fathers' betters avow us to be
And we that captur'd the seat of sev'n-gated Thebes
Tho' a scantier host 'neath the wall of Ares we led,
For the signs of the Gods we obey'd and had Zeus for our help.
By their own folly those others perish'd and fail'd;
Count not our fathers then like-honour'd with us.'
And, louting upon him, Diomed spake to his friend:
'Sit thou silent, my brother, and listen to me;
I grudge not the Lord Agamemnon, shepherd of men,
That he chide the well-greav'd Achæans and urge them to fight.
His will the glory be if the sons of Achæa
Vanquish the Trojans and holy Ilion take,
His too the grief if the Argives vanquish'd shall be;
Come then, we two will our furious valour recall.'
So spake he, and leapt from his chariot, arm'd, to the ground,
And terribly rang on the hero's breast, as he mov'd,
The bronze, so that even a brave man fear would have felt.

As when on the echoing shore the waves of the sea
Rise, line upon line, 'neath the Southwind's furious blast;
First on the deep they lift up their heads, but anon
Break on the land with a roar and, arching their crests,
Beat on the headlands and spew the spindrift afar,
So closely array'd did the Danaan phalanxes move
Unceasing to battle. The captains with words of command
Spake, but the rest march'd silent, nor couldst thou have
deem'd

That all those thousands had any voice in their breasts
Who silent obey'd the commands; and on every man
Glitter'd the inlaid armour wherewith they were clad.

But the Trojans were even as sheep that numberless stand
In a rich man's yard awaiting their turn to be milk'd
And ceaselessly bleat, for they hear the cry of their lambs,
So through the host of the Trojans the clamour arose
For no one language they had nor a similar tongue
But mix'd was their speech and from many countries they
came;

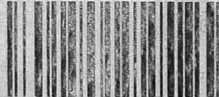
These by Ares were urged and these by Athena,
By Panic or Terror, or Strife unwearied in rage—
Sister and friend of manslaying Ares she was,
Small at first and lowly her crest, but anon
She lifts her head to the sky yet walks on the earth
And now, as she went through the press, she cast
A general discord and made men's groaning to wax.
And soon as the battle they join'd and together were met
Then clash'd they shield-hide and spear and the fury of men,
Bronze-mail'd warriors, and high-boss'd shields on each other
Press'd hard, and dreadful indeed was the din that arose;
And the voices of groaning and triumph together were blent,
Men slaying and slain, and the black earth stream'd with their
blood

And ev'n as in winter the torrents rush from the hills
To a watersmeet, and mingle their furious flood,
Drawn from their welling springs, in a hollow ravine,
And the roaring reaches the shepherd up in the hills;
E'en such was the noise and the travail when battle was join'd.

Antilochus first a valiant Trojan o'erthrew
In the front of the fight, Echeolus Thalysius' son;
Him on the ridge of his crested helmet he smote,
And the brazen point of the spear was fix'd in his brow,
Piercing the bone, and darkness shrouded his eyes
And he crash'd like a tower in the murderous mellay of men.

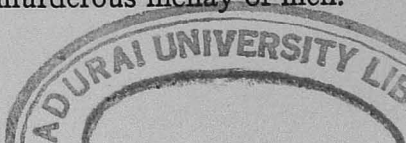
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And the lord Elphenor seiz'd him fall'n, by the foot,
Chalcodon's son, of warlike Abantes the chief,
And was dragging him clear of the missiles, eager at once
His arms to despoil, yet brief was his labour therein
For gallant Agenor, seeing him haling the corpse,
And marking his side, as he stoop'd, unguarded by shield,
Smote with his bronze-tipp'd spear and loosen'd his limbs.
And his spirit departed, and over his body the toil
Of Trojans and Danaans wax'd, as like ravening wolves
They leapt on each other and man beat man to the earth.
Then Ajax, Telamon's son, Simoesius smote,
Anthemion's lusty son that his mother had borne
By Simois' banks as from Ida's pastures she came
Having gone with her parents thither to visit their flocks
And so Simoesius nam'd him, yet nowise did he
His parents repay for his nurture, for little indeed
Was the span of his life by reason of Ajax's spear;
On his right nipple it smote, as he fought in the van,
And straight through his shoulder the brazen point of it pass'd
And prone on the dusty earth like a poplar he fell
That has grown in a great marsh on a low-lying plain,
Smooth-bark'd from the root, for its branches grow at the top;
This with his gleaming axe a wainright has fell'd
To bend him a rim for a goodly chariot wheel
And it lies drying beside the banks of a stream.
E'en so did Ajax the young Simoesius slay,
Anthemion's son, and at Ajax Antiphus cast,
Aiming over the throng with his keen-pointed spear,
But miss'd him, and Leucas, Odysseus' valiant squire,
He hit in the groin, as he drew the dead man away,
And prone he fell on the corpse and it slipp'd from his hand.
And Odysseus was wroth in his soul for the slaying of him
And strode through the foremost fighters in glittering bronze
And stood by his fallen comrade and, glaring about,
His javelin hurl'd, and the Trojans shrank to the rear
When the hero cast, for he sped not the javelin in vain
But Priam's base-born son Demodocus smote,
That came from Abydos, beside his fleet-footed mares;
So him did Odysseus in wrath with his javelin strike
On the temple, and straight through his other temple the point
Drave on that he died, and darkness shrouded his eyes
And he fell with a crash and his armour clang'd as he fell.
And the foremost fighters and Hector yielded their ground
And the Argives shouted and haled the bodies away

And onward press'd, but Apollo from Pergamos' tower
Look'd down indignant and cried to the warriors of Troy:
'Rouse yourselves, horse-taming Trojans, and yield not the
fight

To the Argives, for neither of stone nor of iron is their flesh
That their bodies, when smitten, the piercing bronze should
resist.

Achilles moreover, bright-hair'd Thetis's son,
Fights not, but broods by the ships in heart-searing wrath.'

The dread God spake, but Athena, daughter of Zeus,
Most glorious Tritogeneia, the Achaeans arous'd
When she saw them slackening in fight as she strode through
the press.

Then in the toils of fate Diores was caught,
Amarynceus' son, when his right ankle was struck
By a jagged stone that the Thracian leader had hurl'd,
Piros, Imbrasus' son, an Aenian prince,
And the bones and both the tendons were utterly crush'd
By the ruthless stone and he fell on his back in the dust
With hands outstretch'd to his comrades, seeking their help
As he gasp'd out his spirit, and Piros, he that had cast,
Leapt on his man and his navel pierc'd with a spear
And his bowels let out; and darkness shrouded his eyes.
But Aetolian Thoas wounded his slayer in turn
With a cast of his spear, and the point was fix'd in his lung,
And Thoas approach'd him and gripp'd the ponderous spear
And pluck'd from the wound, and, drawing his keen-whetted
knife,

Smote him full in the belly and reft him of life
Yet stripp'd not his arms, for his Thracian comrades were there,
Top-knotted braves, with their long spears in their hands,
And for all his stature and strength and prowess in arms
Drave him off from the body, and reeling he fled.
So lay the chieftains together, stretch'd in the dust,
He of the Thracians and he of the bronze-mail'd Epeians,
Two leaders, and round them many a comrade that fell.
Then had he found no fault that should enter the fray
Unwounded by arrow or spear and walk in their midst
Scatheless, with Pallas Athena holding his hand
And guiding his steps and warding the darts from his head;
So many Trojans and many Achaeans that day
Lay side by side on their faces, stretch'd in the dust.

*Further details of the fighting. The valour of Diomed,
who wounds even Ares and Aphrodite.*

AND now in Diomed Pallas Athena again
Breath'd courage and strength that he might conspicu-
ous shine

'Mong all the Achaeans and glory win for himself;
And she kindled unwearying fire from his helmet and shield,
Like to the Dogstar in autumn that shines most bright
When his fires he has dipp'd in the baths of Oceanus;
Such a flame as this did she draw from his shoulders and head
And sent him midmost the fighters where thickest they
throng'd.

One Dares there was 'mong the Trojans, noble and rich,
Priest to Hephaestus the Firegod, and two sons he had,
Idaeus and Phegeus, skill'd in all manner of war:
These dash'd forth from the throng and at Diomed charg'd,
They in their chariot, while he was afoot on the ground
And when in their onset near to each other they were,
Phegeus was first to cast with his long-shadow'd spear
And over his left shoulder the point of it went
But touch'd not his body; and next Tydides at him
Cast and his javelin sped not amiss from his hand
But smote him between the nipples and dash'd him to earth.
Forth leapt Idaeus, leaving his beautiful car,
Nor dar'd to remain and his slain brother bestride,
Else had he never escap'd the issue of death,
And Hephaestus, to save him, a veil of darkness o'erspread
Lest his old priest should be utterly broken with grief;
And great-hearted Diomed drove his horses away
And gave to his comrades to take to the swift-going ships.
But the valiant Trojans, when Dares' sons they beheld
How one was in flight and one by his chariot slain,
Had fear in their hearts. But grey-eyed Athena the hand
Of furious Ares took and address'd him and said:
'Blood-stain'd manslaying Ares, stormer of walls,
Can we not leave the Achaeans and Trojans to fight
Whichever it be to whom Zeus the glory shall give
And ourselves make room and escape the anger of Zeus?'

So spake she and furious Ares led from the field
And far off by shoaly Scamander made him to sit;
And the Danaans routed the Trojans and each of their chiefs
An enemy slew, and King Agamemnon was first
The Halizonian lord, great Odius, to hurl
From his chariot, for ev'n as he fled he planted his spear
Between his shoulders and out it came through the breast,
And he fell with a crash and his armour clang'd as he fell.

Then slew Idomeneus Phaestus of Maeonia,
Borus's son, that from deep-soil'd Tarna had come;
Him with his spear did fam'd Idomeneus smite
On the right shoulder, just as he mounted his car,
And he pitch'd from the chariot and loathly death on him fell.
So him Idomeneus' henchman spoil'd of his arms,
And Strophius' son Scamandrius, skill'd in the chase,
Him Menelaus Atrides slew with the spear,
That mighty hunter whom Artemis taught with the bow
To shoot all game that in mountain forests is bred,
But nought did the Huntress Artemis profit him now
Nor his markmanship wherein he was wont to excel,
For him Menelaus Atrides, fam'd with the spear,
Smote as he fled before him full in the back
Between his shoulders and drave the spear through his breast
And he fell on his face and his armour clang'd as he fell.
And Meriones slew Phereclus, deft-finger'd son
Of Harmonides that could make all curious work
With his hands, for Athena lov'd him most among men.
He also it was that for Paris builded the ships,
The spring of evil, to all the Trojans a bane
And the Craftsman himself, for he knew not the signs from the
Gods:

Him did Meriones pursue and o'ertake,
And his right buttock he smote, and the point of the spear
Drave right through the bladder under the bone
And he fell to his knees with a shriek and death veil'd his eyes.
Then Megas o'erthrew Antenor's warrior son,
Pedaeus, a bastard, whom goodly Theano his wife
As her own children, to pleasure her husband, had nurs'd;
Him did the son of Phyles, fam'd with the spear,
Smite from near, on the head, by the nape of the neck,
And the spear drave through and sever'd the root of his tongue
And he fell in the dust as the cold bronze he bit with his teeth.
And Euaemon's son Eurypylus Hypsenor slew,
Proud Dolopion's son that was priest at the shrine

Of Scamander, by all the people rever'd as a God;
Him Eurypylus, son of Euaemon, pursued
As he fled before him and smote on his shoulder and arm
With a sweep of his trenchant sword and shore it away,
And his arm fell bleeding to earth and the darkness of death
By Fate's imperious hand came down on his eyes.
So labour'd they in the violent mellay of war
But of Diomed's place in the battle couldst thou not tell
Whether among the Achaeans or Trojans he went
For he storm'd o'er the plain like a winter torrent in flood
That razes and scatters the dykes, so swiftly it flows,
And the strong-link'd barrier of dykes can hold it not in
Nor the walls of the fruitful orchards and vineyards can stay
Its sudden onset when swol'n by the downpour of heav'n,
And there perish before it fair works full many of men;
So Diomed routed the serried battalions of Troy
And they could not, for all they were many, his onset abide.

But now was he mark'd of Lycaon's glorious son
As he storm'd o'er the plain and drove the battalions in rout,
And quickly at Tydeus' son his arrow he drew
And smote him as onward he sped on his breastplate of bronze
By the right shoulder and through it the well-feather'd shaft
Held straight on its way and his corslet was dabbled with
blood;

And over him shouted Lycaon's glorious son:
'Great-hearted Trojans, goaders of horses, arise!
The best of the Danaans is hit and I deem not that he
The arrow will long endure if Apollo my Lord
Verily sped my parting from Lycia's land.'
Vaunting he spake, but the other, untam'd of his wound,
Gave place and in front of his horses and chariot stood
And Sthenelus, son of Capaneus, straightway address'd:
'Quick! Sweet son of Capaneus, step from the car
And draw from my shoulder the bitter fang of the dart.'
So spake he and down from the chariot Sthenelus leapt
And the shaft from his shoulder drew right through by its head
And blood from his pliable tunic gush'd as he drew,
And then spake stalwart Diomed, uttering his prayer:
'Hear me, O daughter of Zeus, unweariable,
If ever thou lovedst my father and stoodest by him
In the raging battle, be kind, O Athena, to me;
Grant me to slay my foe, and bring within range
The man that shot me at vantage and boasts o'er me now,
Saying that the light of the sun I shall not see for long.'

So spake he praying, and Pallas her suppliant heard
And nimbleness gave to his limbs, both his hands and his feet,
And standing beside him in winged words to him spake:
'Take heart, Tydides, against the Trojans to fight,
For thy father's courage now have I put in thy breast
Undaunted, e'en such as the shield-bearing Tydeus possess'd,
And have lifted from off thy eyelids the cloud that was there
And given thee power to distinguish mortal and God.
Therefore if now any God make trial of thee
Fight thou not with Immortals, force against force,
Save only if Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus,
Enter the battle, her mayst thou smite with the bronze.'

So speaking, grey-eyed Athena went on her way
And again Tydides return'd to the front of the fight;
E'en though he was eager before to do battle with them
Yet now was he trebly bold, as a lion is bold
That a shepherd has found in his sheepfold prowling around
'Mong his snow-fleec'd sheep and has wounded but not over-
come—

His rage he has rous'd and now will face him no more
But creeps into cover and leaves his flocks to their foe
And the poor sheep huddle together and perish in heaps,
But he, having glutted his fury, leaps from the fold.
So furious, Diomed swiftly the Trojans assail'd
And Astynous slew and Hypeiron, shepherd of men;
This one he pierc'd through the breast with his bronze-headed
spear

And the other beside the neck on the collar-bone smote
With his great sword and sever'd shoulder from back.
And next after Abas and brave Polyidus he went,
Sons of old Eurydamas, dreamer of dreams,
Yet he read no dreams for his sons when they went to the war
But stalwart Diomed slew and despoil'd them of arms.
Then Xanthus and Thoon, Phaenops's sons, he pursued,
Striplings both, but their father with age was outworn,
And no other son could beget to inherit his wealth;
And Diomed slew them both and bereft them of life
And left to their father lamentation and woe,
Seeing he welcomed them not from the battle alive
And distant kinsmen divided his substance at last.
And then two sons of Dardan Priam he caught,
Echemmon and Chromius, riding together, and slew;
And ev'n as a lion leaps on the pasturing kine
In a woodland and breaks the neck of a heifer or bull,

E'en so did the son of Tydeus set them on earth
Unwilling, in evil plight, and despoil'd them of arms
And their horses gave to his comrades to drive to the ships.
So wreak'd he havoc, and him Aeneas descried
And went through the battle amidst the hurtling of spears
If haply godlike Pandarus there he might find;
And he found the son of Lycaon, noble and tall,
And standing before his face a word to him spake:
'Paris, where now are thy bow and thy feathery shafts
And the glory that no man in Troyland can challenge thee in
Nor any in Lycia boast him thy better to be?
Come, make prayer to Cronion and shoot at the man
That is lording it here and countless evil has wrought,
For of many a noble Trojan the knees he has loos'd.
Or is he a God enrag'd for his sacrifice meats
Unfurnish'd? For heavy indeed is the wrath of a God.'

And to him made answer Lycaon's glorious son:
'Aeneas, of bronze-mail'd Trojans a counsellor sage,
Most like the wise son of Tydeus I deem him to be
To judge by the crested helmet and glittering shield
And the horses he drives; yet a God he surely may be!
But if he is Tydeus' son and a man, as I deem,
Yet not without help of a God does he furious rage
That stands at his side, his shoulders envelop'd in cloud,
And has turn'd from its mark my swift dart e'en as it lit.
For once already I shot my arrow and smote
On his right shoulder straight through his breastplate of bronze
And thought to have hurl'd him to Hades' house of the dead
Yet vanquish'd him not; some God enrag'd it must be.
No horses have I nor chariot whereon I might mount,
And yet in Lycaon's halls fair chariots there are
Elev'n, new-wrought, new-gear'd, and over them spread
Fair cloths, and by each of the chariots a stallion pair
Stand ready, champing their grain, white barley and spelt.
Moreover, Lycaon, the aged spearman at home,
Laid on me constant charge, when I went to the war,
Bidding his son mount horses and chariot to lead
The horse-taming Trojans when ent'ring the mellay of war;
But alas I obey'd him not, tho' well it had been,
Sparing the horses that always had eaten their fill
Lest perchance in the crowd of warriors their fodder they lack.
Therefore I left them and came to Ilion afoot
Trusting my bow; yet that was to profit me not
For already at two of their chieftains a shaft I have aim'd,

The sons of Tydeus and Atreus, and both of them hit
And verily drawn forth blood, yet have rous'd them the more;
And so in an evil hour I took from its peg
My crescented bow the day that to Ilion's keep,
To pleasure the godlike Hector, my Trojans I led.
And if once I return and in Lycia behold with my eyes
My country and wife and the high-roof'd palace my home,
Then may some alien swordsman cut off my head
If I break not forthwith to splinters this bow with my hands
And cast on the blazing fire, for 'tis worthless as air.'

And Aeneas, the Trojan chieftain, answer'd and spake:
'Speak thou not so; thy fortune can change not a whit
Ere we with chariot and horses to meet him shall go
And of stalwart Diomed's strength make trial in arms.
Come then, mount thou my chariot and see with thine eyes
How skill'd are the horses of Tros to follow or flee
Hither and thither in full speed over the plain
And will even save me alive if so it shall be
That Zeus to the son of Tydeus the victory give.
Come then, take thou the shining reins and the whip
And I will dismount in the mellay and Diomed fight,
Or do thou withstand him and I will look to the car.'
And to him did the glorious son of Lycaon reply:
'Aeneas, do thou take the reins, for the horses are thine
And the better will speed with a charioteer that they know;
If it happen perchance that from Tydeus' son we must flee,
Restive and wild they may be for lack of thy voice
And refuse for a stranger to carry us out of the fight,
And the great-hearted son of Tydeus may set upon us
And slay us and make of thy whole-hoov'd horses a spoil.
Do thou then drive thy chariot and horses thyself
And I with my keen-pointed spear will his onset await.'
So saying, their inlaid chariot they mounted at once
And their fleet-footed horses 'gainst Diomed eagerly drove;
And Sthenelus, seeing them, Capaneus' glorious son,
Straightway in winged words Tydides address'd:
'Diomed, son of Tydeus, dear to my heart,
Two stalwarts eager to fight thee I see on thy track,
Of might beyond measure; the one, in archery skill'd,
Pandarus son of Lycaon avows him to be,
And Aeneas of noble Anchises boasts him the son
And 'twas Aphrodite that bore him, a mother divine.
But come, to our chariot retire we, and cease thou to rage
In the front of the fight lest thy life thou miserably lose.'

And stalwart Diomed, louting upon him, replied:
'Prate not of flight, thou shalt never persuade me to flee:
'Tis not in my blood to skulk or to cower in the fight
And my spirit within me is steadfast still as of old,
Nor think I a chariot to mount but ev'n as I am
Will face them afoot, for Athena bade me not quail;
As for them, though one or the other escape me alive,
Yet both shall not drive from the battle their swift-footed
steeds.

And this, moreover, I say, do thou lay it to heart:
If gracious Athena grant me the glory to win
Of slaying them both, do thou our horses restrain,
Binding the reins on the rail, where they stand on the field,
And Aeneas' horses—remember to fall upon them
And drive them away from the Trojan lines to the camp,
For theirs is the breed that the all-seeing Father to Tros
As recompense gave for Ganymede, swiftest and best
Of all the horses beneath the dawn and the sun;
'Tis the breed Anchises once from Laomedon stole
When his mares he privily put to the stallions of Tros;
Of these an offspring of six in his palace was born
And four he kept for himself and rear'd at the stall
But two to Aeneas he gave, dread master of rout.
If these we could capture in fight, great glory were ours.'

So spake the comrades and ceas'd, and those others anon,
Driving their fleet-footed horses, nearer approach'd,
And first did the son of Lycaon utter his word:
'Strong-soul'd and proudest, of haughty Tydeus the son,
The bitter fang of my arrow vanquish'd thee not;
So now will I try with the spear, if perchance I may hit.'
So spake he and brandish'd and hurl'd his long-shadow'd spear
And smote on Diomed's shield, and right through the shield
On his breastplate of mail the brazen point of it struck,
And over him shouted Lycaon's glorious son:
'Thou art smitt'n through the belly; methinks that thou shalt
not for long
Hold up thy head; thou hast given great glory to me.'
And him, naught daunted, the son of Tydeus address'd:
'Thou hast miss'd me, not hit, yet again, and I deem that ye
two

Shall cease not from fight till one or the other have fall'n
And glutted with blood fell Ares, insatiate God.'
So spake he, and cast, and Athena guided the spear
To his nose by the eyeball's side, and it pass'd through his teeth

And the bronze unwearying cut through the root of his tongue
And the point came out and was stay'd 'neath the base of his
chin,

And he fell from the car and his armour clang'd as he fell,
His glittering mail, but his horses swerv'd in their course,
That fleet-footed pair, and his life and his strength were
unstrung.

But Aeneas leapt to the ground with his long spear and shield,
For he fear'd lest the Danaans should hale the body away,
And bestrode the dead like a lion that trusts in his strength
And held before him his spear and the orb of his shield
Eager to slay whosoe'er should affront him in fight
And shouting his terrible cry; but the other a stone
Grasp'd in his hand, enormous, that two could not lift
Of the men of to-day, but he wielded it lightly alone;
Therewith Aeneas he smote in the point of the hip
Where the thigh-bone turns in its socket (men call it the cup),
Bruising the cup-bone and breaking the tendons withal
And the skin round the joint. Then rested the hero a while,
Fall'n on his knees and with stout hand pillar'd himself
On the earth, and the blackness of night o'ershadow'd his eyes.
And now Aeneas had perish'd, shepherd of men,
Save the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite, had mark'd it and saved
The son she conceiv'd by Antenor, tending the kine;
For she in her snow-white arms enfolded her son
And spread before him a fold of her radiant robe
To fend him from darts, lest one of the swift-hors'd Achaeans
Should plant a spear in his breast and bereave him of life.
So out of the fight her beloved Aeneas she bore
Nor yet did Capaneus' son his errand forget
Nor the charge that great-hearted Diomed laid upon him,
But his whole-hoov'd horses away from the tumult he took
Binding the reins to the rail where they stood on the field
And Aeneas' sleek-coated horses he fell on and seiz'd
And amongst the well-greav'd Achaeans drove them away.
Now these to his friend Deipylus, dearest belov'd
Of his fellows in age (for a kindred spirit was he)
He gave in charge to drive to the Danaan camp
And then to his own chariot mounted again
And quickly the whole-hoov'd horses to Diomed drove.
Now he made onset on Cypris with pitiless bronze
For well did he know that a coward Goddess she was,
Not one of those that have power in the battles of men,
No peer of Athena or Enyo, sacker of towns:

And when in the throng of Trojans he came upon her,
The son of great-hearted Tydeus thrust with his spear,
Leaping to strike, and wounded the skin of her hand,
Her delicate hand, and the dart prick'd into her flesh
On the thick of the palm, right through the ambrosial robe
That the Graces had woven, and drew the Goddess's blood,
Such ichor as runs in the veins of the blessed Gods;
For bread they eat not nor drink of the bright-hearted wine
And therefore bloodless they are and Immortals are call'd.
And now with a cry she let fall her great-hearted son,
And him did Phoebus Apollo save with his hands
In a steel-blue cloud, lest one of the swift-hors'd Achaeans
Should plant a spear in his breast and bereave him of life,
But o'er her the stalwart Diomed shouted and spake:
'Give place, thou daughter of Zeus, leave fighting and war,
Is't not enough that thou cozenest maidens and wives?
If nevertheless thou art minded to meddle with war,
Methinks thou wilt shudder to hear the name from afar.'

He spake, and she fled in amaze, sore troubled at heart,
And windshod Iris took her at once by the hand
And led from the throng, tormented and livid with pain,
To where impetuous Ares sitting she found;
His spear and fleet-footed horses lean'd on a cloud,
And she fell to her knees, imploring her brother belov'd
To lend her his golden-frontleted horses, and spake:
'Save me, O brother, and lend me thy fleet-footed steeds
To reach the Immortals' house, the Olympian seat:
I am wounded sore and a mortal dealt me the wound,
Tydides, who now would do battle even with Zeus.'
So spake she, and Ares gave her his frontleted steeds,
And she mounted the chariot, grieving sore in her heart,
And Iris beside her, grasping the reins in her hands,
Laid lash to the horses and nothing loath did they fly;
And they quickly came to Olympus, the seat of the Gods,
And windshod Iris the horses loos'd from the yoke
And stall'd and before them food ambrosial set.
But the Goddess, fair Aphrodite, fell on the lap
Of her mother, Dione, who clasp'd her child in her arms
And caress'd with her hand and spake and call'd her by name:
'Who now of the Heavenly ones has dealt with thee thus
As though some wrong thou hadst done in the sight of us all?'
And light-of-love Aphrodite answer'd and said:
'Tydeus' son, proud Diomed, wounded me thus
Because from the battle my son Aeneas I sav'd

That of mortal men is the dearest to me by far.
 No longer for Troy and Achaea the battlecry is,
 But ev'n with Immortals the Danaans fight in the field.'
 And the Goddess, fair Dione, answer'd again:
 'Courage, my child! For all thy anguish, endure,
 For many of us in Olympus' mansions that dwell
 Have suffer'd from men, and woes on each other have brought.
 Ares suffer'd when Otus and strong Ephialtes,
 Sons of Aloeus, bound him in prison-house strong;
 Thirteen moons was he bound in a vessel of bronze,
 And then would Ares, insatiate of battle, have died
 But the princes' stepmother, Eeriboea the fair,
 Sent tidings to Hermes, who stole the Wargod away,
 Now pining and faint, for his bondage was wearing him out.
 So suffer'd Hera when strong Amphitryon's son
 Smote her with three-barb'd arrow and wounded her breast
 And pain unassuaged must the Queen of Heaven endure.
 So suffer'd the great God Hades a wound like the rest
 When this selfsame man, that was son of all-ruling Zeus,
 'Mong the corpses in Pylos shot him and rack'd him with pains;
 And to high Olympus he went, to the mansion of Zeus,
 In anguish of mind and tortur'd in body with pain,
 For the shaft was deep embedded and sore were his pangs,
 And Paeon his soothing medicines smear'd on the wound
 And heal'd it, for flesh of a God is immortal in grain.
 Reckless and violent man and unconscionable
 That so with his archery vex'd the Olympian Gods!
 And now has Athena loos'd this warrior on thee,
 Fond man! for Diomed knows not this in his heart
 That he who fights with Immortals lives not for long
 Nor ever his children prattle and smile on his knees
 When from war and the terrible mellay home he returns;
 And so let the son of Tydeus, strong tho' he be,
 Bethink him that better than thou may be met on the field,
 Lest Aegialea, Adrastus' daughter, his wife,
 With her lamentation awake her household from sleep
 Bewailing her wedded husband, the best of his peers,
 E'en she that is horse-taming Diomed's high-hearted spouse.'
 So spake she, and wiped from her wrist the ichor away,
 And the hand heal'd and the heavy pangs were assuaged.
 But Athena and Hera, beholding, were jealous at heart
 And with taunting speeches the son of Cronos provok'd,
 And thus did the grey-eyed Goddess, Athena, begin:
 'Zeus, father! wilt thou be wroth at the word that I speak?

Methinks that Cypris was urging some Danaan dame
To follow the Trojans whom now o'er measure she loves,
And, stroking that fair-rob'd lady, ev'n as I said,
Scratch'd on her golden brooch her delicate hand.'
And the Father of Gods and men replied not but smiled
And, calling the golden Goddess, a word to her spake:
'Not for thee, dear child, is the business of dolorous war;
Thine are the amorous tasks of wedlock and love,
But for all these matters Athena and Ares shall care.'
So they, the Immortal Gods, held converse in heaven,
But meanwhile Diomed brave Aeneas assail'd,
Well knowing that over him Phoebus had stretch'd out his arm,
Yet he reck'd not even of Gods but eagerly rush'd
Aeneas to slay and despoil of his glorious arms.
Thrice he leapt on his foe, intending to slay,
And thrice did Apollo beat back his glittering shield,
But the fourth time that he dash'd on him, strong as a God,
With a terrible cry Apollo address'd him and spake:
'Think, Tydides, and yield, nor desire with a God
To match thy spirit, for no comparing there is
Of the race of Immortals with men that walk on the earth.'

So spake he, and Tydeus' son retreated a space
Avoiding the wrath of Apollo, the far-shooting God,
But Aeneas Phoebus remov'd far off from the throng
To Pergamon's holy height where his temple was built;
There Leda and Artemis, Huntress Queen of the chase,
In the mighty sanctuary heal'd and glorified him,
But the Lord of the silver bow a phantom devis'd,
Aeneas' self in his form and the armour he wore,
And round the phantom the Trojans and noble Achaeans
Hew'd either the others' bucklers guarding their breasts,
Both their round shields and their targes feathery-light.
Then Phoebus address'd impetuous Ares and spake:
'Ares, blood-stain'd manslayer, stormer of walls,
Wilt thou not follow this man and withhold him from war,
This son of Tydeus, that ev'n with the Father would fight?
Cypris he wounded first on her hand at the wrist
And then did he spring upon me, in the strength of a God.'
So spake he, and seated himself on Pergamon's height
While baleful Ares the ranks of the Trojans arous'd
In the likeness of Acamas, captain of Thracia's hosts:
And thus on the heav'n-nurtur'd sons of Priam he call'd:
'Ye sons of Dardanian Priam, heav'n-nurtur'd King,
How long will ye suffer your folk to be slain by the foe?

Shall it be till around the Scaean gateway they fight?
Low lies the man whom we honour'd as Hector himself,
Aeneas, noble Antenor's great-hearted son;
Come, save we our valiant friend from the tumult alive.'

So saying, he stirr'd the strength and the spirit of each,
But then Sarpedon godlike Hector rebuk'd:
'Hector, where now is thy force and thy spirit of old?
Thou saidest that Troy thou wouldst hold without allies or help
Alone with thy own brother and brothers-in-law;
Yet here can I none of them see, nor anywhere near,
But like dogs at the sight of a lion they cower and hide.
We only, the allies among you, are fighting afield;
Myself am an ally, from very far am I come—
Far off in Lycia, by Xanthus' eddying stream
Where a dear-lov'd wife and an infant son I have left
And great possessions, the envy of each one in need.
Yet still my Lycians I urge and am minded myself
To fight my man, tho' in Troyland is nothing of mine
Such that the sons of Achaea can plunder or drive;
But thou standest silent, and even the warriors of Troy
Thou biddest not steadfast abide their wives to defend.
Beware lest thou be as the burrs in a tangle of flax
And become to your warlike foemen a prey and a spoil;
They are many and soon will o'erturn your well-peopled town.
'Tis for thee, O Hector, to think by night and by day
Of all these things, exhorting thy allies to stand
Unwavering, and so put away these reproaches from thee.'

So spake Sarpedon, and Hector was stung to the quick
And straightway leapt from his chariot, arm'd, to the ground
And, shaking his keen spears, everywhere rang'd through the
host,

Bidding them fight, and the dreadful warcry awoke;
And so they were rallied to face the Achaeans again.
But the Argives in serried ranks their onset withstood
And, ev'n as the wind o'er a threshing-floor carries the chaff,
When they winnow the corn, and under the rush of the wind
Gold-hair'd Demeter divides the husks from the grain
And the drift of the chaff grows white, ev'n so the Achaeans
Were whiten'd by clouds of dust that the hooves of the steeds
Beat up in their midst to the brazen heaven above
When the Trojans return'd to the charge and their chariots
wheel'd.

Thus bore they onward and round them a curtain of night
Impetuous Ares drew their battle to help,

Ranging this way and that, and fulfill'd the behests
Of Apollo of the golden sword, who had bidden him arouse
The Trojans' spirit when Pallas Athena he saw
Departing, for she from of old was the Danaans' help.
And Apollo himself from his splendid sanctuary
Sent forth Aeneas and courage breath'd in his breast,
And again he stood on the plain and his comrades rejoic'd
When they saw their chieftain among them alive and unscath'd,
His valiant spirit renew'd. Yet they question'd him not,
For that did the labour forbid that Apollo arous'd
And manslaying Ares and Strife unwearable.
But Odysseus and Tydeus' son and the Ajaxes both
Stirr'd the Danaans to fight, yet these of themselves
Flinch'd not nor fear'd the Trojans' furious assaults
But immovable stood like the clouds that the Lord of the Storm
In windless weather has set on the tops of the hills,
Resting in peace when the might of Boreas sleeps
And all the violent winds that are wont to blow
Their strong, shrill blasts to scatter the shadowing clouds;
So steadfast the Argives withstood the Trojans' attack,
And Atrides ranged through the ranks and cheer'd them and
spake:

'Friends, quit you like men and a stout heart keep in your
breasts,
And fear ye your comrades' reproach if ye flinch in the fight;
For more are sav'd than are slain who dishonour fear,
But in flight there is neither glory nor safety at all.'

So spake he, and cast, and a foremost fighter he hit,
Great-hearted Aeneas' comrade, Deicoön,
Pergasus' son, that the Trojans honour'd alike
To the sons of Priam, for ever he fought in the van;
Him did the Lord Atrides smite on the shield,
And it stay'd not the spear, for the point drave on through the
shield

And pierc'd through the belt and low in his belly was fix'd,
And he fell with a crash and his armour clang'd as he fell.
Aeneas next two Danaan champions slew,
Sons of Diocles, Crethon and Orsilochus,
Whose father dwelt in Pherae's well-built town,
A rich man in substance, and drew from a river his line,
The broad Alphéus, that flows through the Pylians' land:
Alpheus begat Orsilochus, ruler of men,
Orsilochus great-hearted Diocles gat in his turn
And to Diocles next twin sons in his palace were born,

Crethon and Orsilochus, two masters of war,
And these in the flower of their youth on the seafaring ships
Follow'd the Argive host to horse-rearing Troy,
To avenge the Atridae, the King of men, Agamemnon,
And brave Menelaus, and death o'ershadow'd them both.
As when on a mountain's crest twin lions are nurs'd
At the teats of their dam in the deep forest-thicket, her lair,
And harry the kine and the fair-fleec'd sheep in the folds
And ravage the farmsteads of men till they in their turn
Are slain at the hands of men by the keen-whetted bronze,
E'en so at Atrides' hands were Diocles' sons
Laid low by the spear, and like two tall pine-trees they fell.
But, seeing them fall'n, Menelaus had pity on them
As he strode through the foremost fighters in glittering bronze,
Shaking his spear, and Ares his courage arous'd
With intent that beneath Aeneas' hands he should fall,
But great-hearted Nestor's son, Antilochus, saw
And strode to the front, for he fear'd for the shepherd of men,
Lest aught should betide that their labour might utterly foil.
They two then were holding their keen-whetted spears in their
hands,
Pointing them each at the other, eager to fight,
When Antilochus' stood by the side of the shepherd of men,
And Aeneas for all his doughtiness waited no more
When he saw two warriors before him awaiting his cast;
And they hal'd the bodies away to the Danaan ranks
And gave to their comrades their ill-starr'd brothers in charge
And themselves turn'd back to the battle in front of the fight.
Then slew they Pylaemenes, peer of the War-god in might,
That the shield-bearing hosts of the Paphlagonians led;
Him Menelaus Atrides, fam'd with the spear,
On the collar-bone under the neck with his javelin smote
And Antilochus, aiming at Mydon his charioteer,
Atymnius' valiant son, as his horses he wheel'd,
His elbow smote with a stone, and straightway the reins,
Figur'd with ivory, fell from his hands in the dust;
And Antilochus, closing, his temple pierc'd with the sword,
And, gasping, he pitch'd from his well-wrought chariot to earth
Headlong, on crown and shoulders, and stood as he fell
(For he lighted on drifted sand) on his head for a while,
Till his horses spurn'd him aside and threw to the ground;
And then Antilochus drove to the Danaan ranks.
Now Hector had mark'd them and straightway fell upon them
With a shout, and the Trojan ranks came on in their might,

By impetuous Ares and terrible Enyo led;
For she to the onset ruthless Turmoil had arm'd
While Ares plied his enormous manslaying spear
And mov'd along Hector's front, and again in his rear.
And Diomed stalwart in battle shudder'd to see
And, ev'n as a shiftless man when crossing a plain
Comes on some swift-flowing river that runs to the sea
And, seeing it boiling with foam, springs backward in fear,
So then Tydides retreated and spake to the host:
'My friends, to think we should marvel at Hector o'ermuch
Because he is skill'd with the spear and a good man of arms,
When always some God is beside him to ward him from death;
E'en now he has Ares to help, in the guise of a man.
Keep ye your face towards the Trojans, tho' yielding your
ground

As ye fight, nor be eager with Gods to do battle amain.'

So Diomed spake, and the Trojans nearer approach'd
And Hector slew two warriors, good men to fight,
In one car riding, Menesthes and Anchialus;
And great Telamonian Ajax had pity on them
And stood hard by and his gleaming javelin cast
And Amphiüs smote, the son of Selagus, he
Rich in cattle and lands, and in Paesus his home;
But Fate had brought him to succour Priam and Troy;
Him now Telamonian Ajax smote on the belt,
And low in his belly the long-shadow'd javelin stuck,
And he fell with a crash, and glorious Ajax advanc'd
To strip off his arms, but the Trojans rain'd on him spears,
Sharp and gleaming, and many he caught on his shield;
But he planted his heel on the corpse and the bronze-headed
spear

Pluck'd out, yet not for all that could he strip from his foe
The beautiful armour as well, o'erwhelm'd by the darts.
Moreover he fear'd the Trojans' doughty defence,
For many and brave were the spearmen that stood in the way
And for all his stature and strength and prowess in arms
Thrust him from them, and shaken he bated his ground.
So labour'd the hosts as they fought in the violent fray,
And Hercules' son Tlepolemus, goodly and tall,
'Gainst divine Sarpedon was driven by imperious Fate;
And when in their onset near to each other they were,
The son and the grandson of Zeus that gathers the clouds,
Tlepolemus first address'd Sarpedon and spake:
'Sarpedon, chieftain of Lycians, what need is for thee

To be cowering here, who of warfaring nothing dost know?
Men lie when they say that thou art the offspring of Zeus
Seeing thou lackest so greatly in courage and strength
Beside those heroes of old that Cronion begat.
Think what manner of man great Hercules was,
The lion-heart hero my father, steadfast and strong,
That to Ilion came Laomedon's horses to fetch
With six ships, no more, and a scantier host in his train;
Yet Troy did he sack and her highways desolate make.
But thine is a craven spirit and feeble thy folk;
Methinks thou camest from Lycia no bulwark to be
To Priam and his sons, for all thou art strong with thy hands,
But to pass through the gates of Hades, vanquish'd by me.'

And to him Sarpedon, the Lycian chieftain, replied:
'Tlepolemus, Ilion truly thy father o'erthrew
But was help'd by a proud man's folly when Laomedon
With reckless upbraiding rewarded his service to him
And paid not the horses for which he had come from afar;
And I say that to thee this day black murder and death
Shall come at my hand when thou, by my spear o'erthrown,
To me the glory shalt give and to Hades thy soul.'
Sarpedon spake, and at once Tlepolemus pois'd
His good ashen shaft, and both their javelins sped
From their hands together; the one Tlepolemus smote
In the midst of his neck and the grievous point of the spear
Drave through, and the blackness of night o'ershadow'd his
eyes.

And Tlepolemus too Sarpedon smote with his spear
On the left thigh, and the bronze drave eagerly on,
Grazing the bone, but his father sav'd him from death.
Now his trusty comrades bore Sarpedon away
Clear of the fight, but the long spear dragg'd on the ground
And gall'd him, and no man mark'd it or none had the wit
To draw out the spear, that again he might walk on his feet;
So eager their haste, for the battle was heavy on them.
And over against them his friends Tlepolemus bore
Clear of the fight, and Odysseus, patient of heart,
Saw and was wroth and his soul within him was stirr'd
And much he debated thereon in his heart, and his mind
Whether the son of the Thunderer first to pursue
Or the rest of the Lycians and take from many their lives.
But Fate ordain'd not that noble Odysseus should slay
Cronion's glorious son with his keen-pointed spear,
And Athena his fury turn'd on the Lycian ranks;

And Coeranus then and Alastor and Chromius he slew,
Aleander and Halius, Noemon and Prytanis slew,
And more of the Lycian men would Odysseus have slain,
But bright-plum'd Hector was swift to mark him and strode
Through the front in his flashing bronze and to Danaana
brought

Dread, and the son of Zeus, Sarpedon, was glad
At Hector's coming and utter'd a word in his pain:
'Thou son of Priam, leave me not here as a prey
To the Danaans, but help me; thereafter may life, if it must,
Depart from my body in Troy, since fated I am
Not to return to my own dear Lycian land
To gladden the hearts of the wife and the babe that I love.'

So spake he, and bright-plum'd Hector answer'd him not
But hasten'd on, for with all his heart he desir'd
To thrust back the Argives and take from many their lives.
But his trusty comrades made Sarpedon to sit
Under the oak-tree sacred to high-sceptred Zeus,
And valiant Pelagon, dearest of comrades to him,
Straightway drew from his thigh the spear-shaft of ash;
And his spirit fled and a mist o'ershadow'd his eyes,
But he came to his senses anon when Boreas' breath
Blew on his face and his sore-spent spirit reviv'd.
But the Argives in face of Ares and Hector enarm'd
Neither turn'd them to flee to their camp by the black-hull'd
ships

Nor yet charged forward to battle, but still to the rear
Fell back when they learned that Ares was fighting for Troy.
Tell me, O Muse, whom first, whom last in that hour
Did Hector the son of Priam and Ares o'erthrow?
Godlike Tenthras, Orestes the charioteer,
Aetolian Trechus the spearman and Oenomaus;
Next Helenus, Oenops' son, and Oresbius fell,
He that in Hyla tended his substance with care
By Cephissus' shallow lagoons, where also there dwelt,
Tilling their deep-soil'd plain, the Boeotians all.
These when the white-arm'd Goddess, Hera, beheld
Slain at their hands in the murderous mellay of war,
Straightway in winged words to Athena she spake:
'Out on it, daughter of Zeus, unwearable,
Was it for naught that we pledg'd Menelaus our word
That home he should go when strong-wall'd Troy he had sack'd,
Seeing that this manslayer, Ares, we suffer to rage?
Let us then also our furious valour recall.'

So spake she, and grey-eyed Athena heard and obey'd;
 And Hera, daughter of Cronos, the Heavenly Queen,
 Departed to harness the fair gold-frontleted steeds,
 And Hebe the brazen wheels of the chariot fix'd,
 Eight-spoked, to the iron axle, on this side and that;
 Of gleaming gold are the felloes, imperishable,
 And bronze are the tires that enfold them, a marvel to see,
 And the naves are of silver that hold the wheels in their place;
 And the chariot is plaited with thongs of silver and gold
 Tight-stretch'd, and a double rail round the edge of it runs.
 In front was the silver pole, and thereon at the end
 She bound a yoke-tree of gold and attach'd to the yoke
 Fair breast-straps of gold. And Hera the fleet-footed horses
 Led 'neath the yoke, and hunger'd for battle and strife.
 And meanwhile Athena, daughter of all-ruling Zeus,
 Cast down at her father's threshold her bright-gleaming robe
 Fine-wov'n, that herself had fashion'd and wrought with her
 hands,
 And, donning the tunic of Zeus that gathers the clouds,
 Array'd her for dolorous battle in armour divine;
 Around her shoulders the tassell'd aegis she cast,
 Awesome, whereon is Panic set in a ring
 And Strife is thereon and Valour and horrible Rout,
 And the Gorgon head of the terrible monster is there,
 Dreadful and grim, the portent of all-ruling Zeus,
 And the ten-ridg'd helmet of gold she set on her head
 Bedeck'd with a hundred cities' brave men-at-arms;
 And she clomb to the flaming chariot and grasp'd in her hand
 Her great spear, heavy and stout, wherewith she o'erthrows
 The ranks of heroes whenever her anger is stirr'd;
 And Hera the fleet-footed horses plied with the lash.
 Self-moving groan'd on their hinges the portals of heaven
 That the Hours warded, to whom is committed their charge
 Whether to roll back the cloud on Olympus or shut;
 And through them they guided the horses heeding the goad
 And found Cronion sitting apart from the Gods.
 On the outermost peak of ridgy Olympus he sat
 And white-arm'd Hera the chariot stay'd by his side
 And Cronian Zeus most high with question address'd:
 'Hast thou no wrath for the War-god's violent deeds,
 Seeing how great and how goodly a host he has slain
 Recklessly, rending my heart, while those others in peace,
 Cypris and Archer Apollo, their triumph enjoy,
 Having loos'd this madman that knows not reason or right?

O Father, canst thou be wroth if I strike with my hands
And chase him, sorely bestead, from the battles of men?'
And Zeus that gathers the clouds made answer and said:
'Tis well; set against him Athena, driver of spoil,
Who many a time ere now has afflicted him sore.'

So spake he, and white-arm'd Hera heard and obey'd
And lash'd the horses and nothing loath did they fly
In a middle course 'twixt earth and the star-spangled heaven.
Far as a man from a place of lookout can see
In the dim distance over the violet sea,
So far did the loud-neighing horses make at a stride,
And when they were come to the swift-flowing rivers of Troy
Where Simois and shoaly Scamander mingle in one,
Then Hera, the white-arm'd Goddess, her chariot stay'd
And the horses unyok'd and a thick cloud over them shed;
And Simois grew for them grass ambrosial to graze.
But the twain with steps like turtle-doves went on their way,
Eager to succour the hard-press'd Danaans afield,
And when they were come where the most and bravest they saw
That throng'd round mighty Diomed, tamer of horses,
Standing at bay like lions hungry for meat
Or boars of the wild whose strength no feebleness is,
Then Hera, the white-arm'd Goddess, shouted and stood
In the likeness of great-hearted Stentor, whose voice was of
brass

And his cry as the cry of fifty, and thus to them spake:
'Fie on you, Argives, fair-seeming base things of shame!
So long as godlike Achilles enter'd the fight
Not once did the foe from the great Dardanian gates
Sally abroad, for they fear'd his terrible spear,
But to-day by the ships and far from the city they fight.'
So spake she, and stirr'd the strength and the spirit of each;
And grey-eyed Athena sprang to Diomed's side
Where the prince by his swift-footed horses and chariot stood
Cooling the wound that Paris's arrow had pierc'd,
For his sweat distress'd him under the belt of his shield;
By that was he vex'd and his arm grew weary and limp,
And she, as she lifted the baldric and wiped off the blood,
With her hand on the yoke of his chariot address'd him and
spake:

'Vainly Tydeus a son unlike him begat;
Tydeus in stature was small but a great man of arms,
For ev'n when I bade him not fight nor peril his life
Nor his valour parade what time unattended he came

As envoy to Thebes, among those many alone—
Ev'n when I urg'd him to sit with them, feasting, in peace,
Yet he, possessing his steadfast soul as of old,
Challeng'd the Cadmean youth and won every match
With ease, so present a helper he had in myself.
As for thee, tho' I stand by thy side and watch o'er thy life,
And bid thee with all my heart 'gainst the Trojans to fight,
Yet either the toil of thy striving has wearied thy limbs
Or spiritless fear has possess'd thee; then art thou indeed
No offspring of Tydeus, the son of Oeneus the wise.'

And stalwart Diomed answer'd the Goddess and spake:
'I know thee, O Goddess, daughter of all-ruling Zeus,
And therefore my thought I will speak nor anything hide;
Nor spiritless fear has possess'd me nor faintness of limb,
But the charge thou laidest upon me is fresh in my mind,
For thou badest me fight not face to face with a God
Save only if fair Aphrodite, the daughter of Zeus,
Should enter the battle, her I might wound with the spear;
Therefore I yield them my ground and likewise have bid
All the other Achaeans to rally to me

For well am I ware that Ares is lording it here.'
And him did the grey-eyed Goddess answer again:
'Diomed, son of Tydeus, thou joy of my heart,
Fear not for that either Ares or any at all
Of the Gods, so trusty a helper am I at thy side.
First then at Ares drive thou thy whole-hoov'd steeds
And smite him in hand-to-hand fight nor hold him in awe
That rages like mischief incarnate, a renegade God
That in converse with Hera and me once pledg'd us his word
To be to the Trojans a foe, to the Argives a help,
Yet now with the Trojans he sides and the Argives forgets.'

So spake she, and drew back Sthenelus out of the car
With a wave of her hand, and at once he sprang to the ground;
And herself by Diomed's side she mounted the car
Right eager, and loudly the oaken axle-tree creak'd
'Neath the double burden of Goddess and great man of arms;
And Pallas Athena grasp'd the whip and the reins
And straight against Ares the whole-hoov'd horses she drove.
Now he had the stalwart Periphas slain in the fight,
Aetolia's bravest, Ochosias' glorious son,
And e'en then was stripping his arms, and Athena did on
Her helmet of darkness that made her to Ares unseen.
And when manslaying Ares godlike Diomed saw,
Then stalwart Periphas left he to lie as he was

Even where first he had slain him and reft him of life,
 And straight at Diomed tamer of horses he made;
 And when in their onset near to each other they were
 Ares was first, across the yoke-tree and reins,
 To cast with his spear and had reft Tydides of life
 But the grey-eyed Goddess, seizing the spear with her hand,
 Thrust it up in the air, and it spent itself there.
 And stalwart Diomed next with his bronze-headed spear
 Ares assail'd, and Athena guided it home
 That low on his belly it struck, where his taslet was girt;
 There did he wound him, rending the beautiful skin
 Immortal, and brazen Ares roar'd like a bull,
 Loud as the war-cry of nine thousand, ten thousand men
 When in furious strife with each other in battle they join,
 And trembling gat hold on the Trojan and Danaan hosts
 For fear; so mightily bellow'd the war-loving God.
 As a thundercloud darkles against a storm-ridden sky
 After heat in summer when winds tempestuous rise,
 So darkly did brazen Ares to Diomed show
 As he fared 'mid the clouds to the spacious heaven above.
 And quickly he came to Olympus, the seat of the Gods,
 And sat beside Cronian Zeus with grief in his heart
 And show'd the immortal blood that flow'd from the wound
 And with piteous voice in winged words to him spake:
 'Zeus, father, art thou not mov'd by these violent deeds?
 For always we Gods cruelly suffer of all
 By each other's devices, while showing our favour to men;
 And with thee we are all at variance, for thou didst beget
 This reckless Maiden accurs'd, whose thought is on wrong.
 For all we others, the Gods in Olympus that dwell,
 Thy allegiance own and in all things are subject to thee,
 Her only thou chastenest not by word or by deed,
 Pestilent Goddess, because thy offspring she is.
 Who now has the son of Tydeus in insolent rage
 Let loose, on the Gods immortal his fury to vent;
 First Cypris he wounded in hand-to-hand fight, on the wrist
 And now he has set upon me, in strength as a God
 Only my swift feet sav'd me, else had I borne
 Anguish for long 'mid the ghastly heaps of the dead
 Or had liv'd as a strengthless ghost by the strokes of his spear.'
 And louting upon him the Cloud-compeller replied:
 'Nay, thou renegade, sit not beside me to whine.
 Most hateful art thou of the Gods in Olympus that dwell
 Since ever thou lovest contention and battle and strife;

Thy mother is stubborn in temper, ungovernable,
E'en Hera my wife, and 'tis hard to rule her with words,
And methinks it was Hera's prompting that brought thee to
this.

Yet for all that I cannot endure thy suffering for long;
My offspring thou art and thy mother bore thee to me,
For, wert thou begotten of any Immortal but me,
Long ere this I had made thee the lowest in heaven.'
He spake, and commanded Paeon to look to the wound;
And on it Paeon spread simples that deaden all pain,
And heal'd him, for not of mortal moulding was he.
Swift as the juice of the fig makes thick the white milk,
Watery-clear, tho' curdling as soon as 'tis stirr'd,
Even as swiftly he heal'd the furious Ares.
And Hebe bath'd him and put fair raiment upon him,
And he sat by Cronian Zeus, rejoicing in glory.
Then back to the palace of Zeus the mighty there went
Alalcomenean Athena and Argive Hera,
Having made dread Ares to cease from his slaying of men.

6

Diomed and Glaucus forbear to fight on discovering their mutual friendship. The women of Troy beseech Athena. Hector bids farewell to his wife and child.

So alone there was left the dread struggle of Trojans and Argives,
 And oft o'er the plain the battle sway'd this way and that,
 As they aim'd one at the other with bronze-pointed spears,
 Between Simois' water and Xanthus' eddying streams.
 Telamonian Ajax it was, the bulwark of Argos,
 Who first broke the Trojan ranks and brought to his friends
 A glimmer of hope; for he smote a chief of the Thracians,
 Acamas, son of Eussorus, doughty and tall.
 Him first he smote on the horn of his crested helm,
 Piercing the forehead, and straight through the bone was driven
 The spearhead of bronze; and darkness enfolded his eyes.
 And Diomed, good at the war-cry, Axylus slew,
 Teuthras' son, whose home was in well-built Arisbe;
 Rich he was in his goods and to all men dear,
 For he dwelt in a house by the road and made all men his guests.
 Yet of these not one on that day met his foes to defend him
 And from woeful death to deliver him; slain were they both,
 Himself and his squire Calesius, who at that time
 Was his charioteer; so both to the underworld pass'd.
 Opheltius then and Dresus Euryalus slew,
 And pursued Aesepus and Pedasus; these were the sons
 Of the water-nymph Abarbarea; their sire
 Was Bucolion, the noble Laomedon's son,
 His eldest born, the fruit of unwedded love;
 When he kept his sheep on the hills, he lay with the nymph
 In love, and she conceiv'd and bare him twin sons;
 And now their might did the son of Mecisteus break,
 Unstringing their limbs, and stripp'd their shoulders of armour.
 Astyalus fell before steadfast Polypoetes;
 With his spear of bronze did Odysseus slaughter Pidytes
 A man of Percota, and Teucer the good Aretaon.
 Ablerus was slain by Antilochus' glittering spear,
 And the king of men, Agamemnon, Elatus slew,
 Whose home was in high-built Pedasus, hard by the banks

Of the fair-flowing Satnioeis; the noble Leitus
Made an end of Phylacus, laying him low as he fled;
And Eurypylus brought Malanthius down to the ground.
But Adrastus the lord Menelaus, good at the war-cry,
Took alive; for his horses, careering over the plain,
Became caught in a tamarisk bough, and the curv'd car
At the end of the shaft was smash'd, and away they sped
To the town, whither the rest were fleeing in rout;
But the charioteer roll'd headlong out, by the wheel,
With his face in the dust. Then Atreus' son, Menelaus,
Came up and stood by him, holding his long-shadow'd spear;
Then Adrastus, clasping his knees, besought him for mercy:
'Son of Atreus, take me alive, and fit ransom is thine;
My father is rich, and at home much treasure there lies,
Bronze and gold and iron toilsomely wrought;
If my father knew that beside the ships of the Argives
I were still alive, he would pay thee ransom past counting.'

So spake he, in hope to persuade the heart in his breast;
And in sooth Menelaus had given the man to his squire
Forthwith, to be led to the swift-going ships, but there came
Agamemnon, running, who thus rebuk'd him and said:
'O good Menelaus, why carest thou thus for the men?
Have deeds so kindly and good been done thee at home
By Trojans? Nay, but let none of them 'scape utter ruin
And these hands of ours, not even the child in the womb,
If it be a man-child—not even such, but let all
Be blotted from Ilios, with no-one to mourn or remember.'
So the warrior spake, and alter'd the mind of his brother,
Counselling right; Menelaus thrust off with his hand
The noble Adrastus; and him did the lord Agamemnon
Smite on the flank, and backwards he fell, and Atrides
Set his foot on his chest and the spear of ashwood drew forth.
Then Nestor shouted aloud and call'd to the Argives:
'My friends, ye Danaan warriors, squires of the War-god,
Let no man now in his eager desire for spoil
Tarry behind, to bring the most goods to the ships;
Nay, let us slay the men; hereafter in peace
Shall ye strip of their armour the dead that lie on the plain.'
With these words he arous'd in every man courage and strength.
Then again would the Trojans, vanquish'd and weak, have been
driven

Up to the town by the Argives, beloved of Ares,
If Aeneas and likewise Hector had not been approach'd
By Priam's son Helenus, best of all augurs by far:

'Aeneas and Hector,' said he, 'since on you above all
Falls the brunt of the Trojan and Lycian defence—for in all
That ye undertake, whether counsel or war, ye are best:
Make a stand and visit all parts of the host and array them
In front of the gates, ere they fling themselves in their flight
In the arms of their womenfolk, to the joy of our foes.
But when ye have arousd each company, we will abide
Here in this place and fight with the Danaan men,
Forspent though we be; for necessity weighs on us hard.
But, Hector, go thou to the city and there do thou speak
To thy mother and mine; bid her gather the aged wives
In the citadel, at the temple of bright-eyed Athena,
And, opening the doors of the holy house with the key,
Let her lay on the knees of fair-hair'd Athena the robe
She deems most graceful and large of those in her hall,
The one most dear to herself; and then let her vow
To sacrifice in her temple there heifers twelve,
Yearlings that never have toil'd, if she will but pity
Troy town and the Trojans' wives and their little children,
If haply from holy Troy she may ward that spearman,
The son of Tydeus, a mighty deviser of rout,
Who is now, methinks, the strongest of all the Achaeans,
Nor even Achilles, though his mother, men say, was a Goddess,
Did we ever fear like this man; for he beyond bounds
Rages, and no-one in might is equal to him.'

So spake he, and Hector his brother's words did obey;
With his armour on, he leapt from his car to the ground
And, brandishing two sharp spears, went right through the
host,

Urging them on to the fray and the dread din of war.
So they turn'd and stood their ground there, fronting the
Argives,

And the Argive host gave way and slaughter'd no more,
For they deem'd an Immortal down from the starlit sky
Had come to the Trojans' help, that thus they should stand.
And Hector call'd to the Trojans, shouting aloud:
'Ye high-hearted Trojans, and ye, our far-fam'd allies,
Be ye men, my friends, and remember your might in the fray,
While I to Ilios go, to order the elders
That give their counsel, and order our wives as well
To pray to the Gods and promise them sacrifice.'
So saying, the bright-plum'd Hector went on his way
And against his neck and his ankles beat the black hide
Of the outer rim that circled his great boss'd shield.

But Glaucus, Hippolytus' son, and the son of Tydeus
Together were met in the midspace, eager to fight.
Now when they were close and each to the other drew nigh,
The first that did speak was Diomed, good at the war-cry:
'Who art thou, my lord,' he said, 'among mortal men?
For never before in the battle where men win renown
Have I seen thee; but now thou com'st forward, outreaching
the rest

In thy boldness, awaiting the cast of my long-shadow'd spear.
Unhappy are they whose children are faced with my fury.
But if an Immortal thou art, come down from the sky,
Then will I not do battle with Gods from above.
Not long did the son of Druas, the mighty Lycurgus,
Have life upon earth, for he strove with the Gods from above;
The nursing-mothers of mad Dionysus he once
Drave down through the heights of sacred Nysa; and they
All dropp'd their wands to the ground, being struck with an
ox-goad

By Lycurgus, slayer of men; then fled Dionysus
And plung'd in the salt sea waves, where Thetis at once
To her bosom took him, afraid as he was; for on him
Great terror had come because of the threats of the man.
Then the Gods who live at their ease were wroth with Lycurgus
And Cronion sent blindness upon him; nor did he live
Long years, being hated by all the immortal Gods.
Therefore with blessed Gods will I not do battle;
But if thou art man and tillest the earth for thy food,
Draw nigh, the sooner to enter the nets of death.'

Then the glorious son of Hippolochus spake to him thus:
'O great-soul'd Diomed, why wouldst thou learn my descent?
Men's generations are even as those of the leaves;
Some are scatter'd to earth by the wind, while others the wood
Puts forth at its burgeoning time, when spring has arriv'd;
Even so some men spring up and some have an end.
But here is thine answer, if thou wilt hear it, to know
What lineage mine is, for many men know what it is.
In the heart of Argos, where horses are bred, is Ephyre,
The city where Sisyphus dwelt, most cunning of men,
Sisyphus, Aeolus' son; now his son was Glaucus,
And Glaucus begat the peerless Bellerophon.
Beauty and manly grace did the Gods upon him
Bestow; but woe for him Proteus plotted at heart,
And drave him from home, for he was the mightier far,
Away from the Argives, whom Zeus had put under his rule.

Now the wife of Proteus, fair Anteia, was fill'd
 With mad desire for Bellerophon, yearning to lie
 In secret love with him; yet could she never persuade
 Bellerophon's heart, so just, so right were his thoughts.
 So with lies in her mouth King Proteus thus she address'd:
 'Either slay Bellerophon, Proteus, or die thyself,
 For in love he desir'd me to lie with him, loth though I be.'
 So spake she, and wroth was the King on hearing her words.
 Slay him he durst not, for awe his spirit restrain'd,
 But he sent him to Lycia, giving him tokens of woe;
 In a folded tablet he grav'd many signs of ill-omen,
 To be shewn to his father-in-law, that the bearer might die.
 So to Lycia went he, with heav'n's irreproachable escort;
 And when he to Lycia came and to Xanthus's stream,
 Gladly the King of broad-way'd Lycia held him
 In honour, and made him his guest for nine whole days;
 And nine oxen he slaughter'd in honour of him.
 But when rosy-finger'd Dawn for the tenth time came,
 Then at last he enquir'd and ask'd for what token soever
 He brought from his son-in-law, Proteus. When he had seen
 The token of death that his daughter's husband had sent,
 He commanded Bellerophon first the raging Chimaera
 To put to death. Not of man's stock was she, but divine,
 Lion-headed, snake-tail'd, and in between them a goat,
 And her breath was of blazing fire with terrible might.
 Her did he slay, for he trusted the signs of the Gods.
 And next he fought with the Solymi, famous in war,
 The fiercest fight, so he said, that e'er he was in;
 And thirdly did he the man-like Amazons slay.
 Now as he return'd, the King yet another plot wove;
 Out of all wide Lycia chose he the bravest of men
 To await him in ambush; but none of them ever came home,
 For the peerless Bellerophon slew them all to a man.
 But now that he knew he was sprung from the race of the Gods,
 The king made him stay there and gave him his daughter to
 boot,
 And of all his kingly estate he gave him a half;
 And the Lycians granted him land surpassing all other,
 Lovely with vineyards and ploughland, for him to possess.
 Now the wife of the wise Bellerophon bare him three children,
 Hippolochus and Isander and Laodamia.
 Laodamia with Zeus the counsellor lay
 And bare the godlike Sarpedon, armour'd with bronze.
 But Bellerophon came to be hated by all of the Gods,

And wander'd alone about the Aleian plain,
Eating his heart out and shunning the pathways of men;
And Isander his son did Ares, who lusts for the fray,
Slay as he fought with the Solymi, famous in war;
His daughter golden-rein'd Artemis slew in her wrath.
Hippolochus sired me—he was my father, I say;
And he sent me to Troy and strictly he gave me command
Ever to be the bravest, surpassing the rest,
And not to bring shame on my fathers' race, for of old
In Ephyre and wide-spread Lycia they were the best.
Such is the blood that I claim, and such my descent.'

So he spake, and gladden'd was Diomed, good at the war-cry.
In the bountiful earth he planted the spear that he held
And with gentle words address'd the shepherd of men:
'To my father's house, forsooth, thou hast long been a friend;
For once did the goodly Oeneus have for his guest
Bellerophon, keeping him twenty days in his halls;
Fair tokens of friendship did each to the other one give:
A girdle of shining scarlet was Oeneus's gift,
And Bellerophon gave a two-handled goblet of gold,
Which I left behind in my palace when hither I came.
Tydeus I call not to mind, being only a child
When he left, and the host of the Argives perish'd at Thebes.
So now in the midst of Argos am I thy friend,
And thou mine in Lycia, whenso I go to that land.
Let us shun, then, ev'n in the mellay, the spears of each other;
There is many a one of the Trojans and famous allies
I can slay, if heaven so grant and my feet overtake him;
And many an Argive for thee to lay low if thou canst.
Let us make exchange of our armour, that these men as well
May know that we claim ourselves friends from the time of our
fathers.'

When thus they had spoken, they both leapt down from their
cars,
And, clasping each other's hands, they swore to be true.
Then did Cronian Zeus of his wits good Glaucus deprive,
For he changed his armour with Diomed, Tydeus' son,
Giving gold worth a hundred oxen for bronze worth nine.
But when Hector arriv'd at the Scaean gates and the oak,
About him came running the daughters and wives of the
Trojans,
Asking after their sons, their brothers, their friends
And their husbands too. He bade them all pray to the Gods,
Each in her turn; but on many was sorrow knit fast.

Now when he had come to the beauteous palace of Priam,
Rear'd with bright colonnades—where fifty apartments
Of polish'd stone were builded, each by its neighbour,
Where the sons of Priam slept with their true-wedded wives;
And over against them, within the court, for his daughters,
Of polish'd stone there were builded, each by its neighbour,
Twelve ceil'd apartments, where slept with their tender wives
The sons-in-law of Priam—there came then to meet him
His mother in welcome; she brought Laodice with her,
Of all her daughters most fair to behold; and she clasp'd him
By the hand, and spake, and call'd him by name: 'My son,
Why hast thou left the reckless fray to come hither?
Surely the sons of the Argives—a name of evil!—
As they ring the city with strife, press hardly upon thee,
And thy spirit has brought thee hither, to raise to Zeus
Thy hands from the city's height. But tarry a while
Till I bring thee honey-sweet wine, that first a libation
To Zeus thou mayest pour, and the other Immortals,
And then thyself shalt have joy of it, if thou but drink.
Wine adds much to the might of a man that is spent,
As thou hast wearied thyself in thy fellows' defence.'

Then bright-plum'd Hector spake in answer to her:
'Lady mother, bring me no wine that sweetens the heart,
Lest, crippled by thee, I forget my strength and my might.
With hands unwashen to pour libation to Zeus
Of sparkling wine, is shame to me; nor may a man
In any wise pray to Cronion, lord of the storm-cloud,
When defil'd with blood and with filth. But go thou to the
shrine

Of Athena, driver of spoil; take offerings with thee,
Assembling the aged wives, and the robe thou accountest
Most graceful and large of those in thy hall, and the dearest
To thine own self; on the knees of fair-hair'd Athena
Lay it, and vow thou wilt offer her there in her shrine
Twelve yearling kine that have toil'd not, if she will but pity
Troy town and the Trojan wives and their little children;
If from holy Troy she may ward that furious spearman,
The son of Tydeus, a mighty deviser of fear.
Go then to the shrine of Athena, the driver of spoil;
To Paris will I go, to call him, if he will but hear me.
Would that the earth might gape at once to receive him!
For the lord of Olympus has rear'd him, a grievous bane
To the Trojans, to great-hearted Priam and all of his sons.
Him if I might behold descending to Hades,

I well might deem my heart had forgotten its woe.'
So spake he; she, calling her maids, went into the hall,
And they gather'd the aged wives from about the city;
But she herself went down to the sweet-smelling closet
Where her broider'd robes were, the work of women of Sidon,
Brought thither once by the godlike Paris himself
As he sail'd the stretching ocean upon that journey
Whereon the high-born Helen he brought to his home.
One of these did Hecuba choose as a gift for Athena,
The fairest embroider'd and largest; it gleam'd like a star
And under the rest it lay. Then forth she did hie,
And after her hasten'd many an aged wife.

When they came to Athena's shrine on the city's height,
It was fair-cheek'd Theáno who open'd the doors for them,
Horse-taming Antenor's wife and daughter of Cisseus;
For the Trojans had made her priestess of the Goddess Athena.
Then with wailing cries all lifted their hands to Athena;
Then took the fair-cheek'd Theano the broider'd robe
And upon the knees of the fair-hair'd Athena she laid it,
And with prayer besought the daughter of mighty Zeus:
'O Lady Athena, who keepest guard on our city,
Fairest of Goddesses, break now this Diomed's spear;
Make him headlong to fall in front of the Scaean gates;
That we twelve yearling kine that never have toil'd
May sacrifice in thy shrine, if thou wilt but pity
Troy town and the Trojan wives and their little children.'
So spake she in prayer, but Pallas Athena refus'd.
Thus these made prayer to the daughter of mighty Zeus,
But Hector to Paris's lovely dwelling repair'd
That himself had builded, along with the men who of all
The builders in deep-soil'd Troyland were then the best.
A chamber, a hall, and a court for him they had made
By Priam's and Hector's, aloft on the city's height.
Therein went Zeus-belov'd Hector; the spear in his hand
Was eleven cubits in length, and before him there blaz'd
The spearhead of bronze, set about with a circle of gold.
And Paris he found in his chamber, inspecting his armour,
His shield and cuirass, and handling the curve of his bow;
While Helen of Argos amidst her maids of the household
Was seated, assigning to them their beauteous tasks.
And Hector at sight of him chid him with words of revilement:
'Thou art wrong, good sir, to cherish this rancour at heart.
About the steep wall and the city thy people are slain
Fighting; because of thyself are clamour and war

Ablaze round the city; thyself any other wouldst chide
Whom thou sawest perchance avoiding the horror of war.
Up with thee, lest very soon the city be burn'd.'
And godlike Paris made answer and spake to him thus:
'Hector, thou chidest me rightly, nor more than my due;
I will tell thee, and do thou listen and take it to heart.
Not out of rage and wrath with the Trojans I sat
Here in my room, but I long'd to give vent to my grief.
And my wife with gentle persuasion has urged, even now,
My return to the fray; 'twill be better so, as I think,
For victory keeps no man for her favourite long.
But stay thou a time, while I put on the trappings of war,
Or go thou, and I will come after and thee overtake.'

So he spake, but bright-plum'd Hector answer'd him not,
And Helen it was who with gentle words him address'd:
'Brother, shameless am I and a worker of mischief abhorr'd;
And would that the day that my mother first brought me forth
An evil blast of the wind had swept me away
To the hills, or a wave of the loud-resounding sea;
The wave might have wash'd me away ere these things could
hap.

Yet seeing the Gods have ordain'd these ills to be mine,
Would I had been the wife of a nobler man,
Who could feel the wrath and the scorn men had for his name.
But no constant mind this husband of mine has, nor shall have
Hereafter; for which, methinks, he shall reap bitter fruit.
But, brother, come in now and sit thee down on this chair,
For on thý heart, more than all others, trouble is come
Through me and my shame and the frenzied passion of Paris;
Ill-fated are we by Zeus, that in days yet to be
The men who shall be hereafter may make us their song.'

Then Hector the great, the bright-plum'd, answer return'd:
'Though thou lovest me, Helen, make me not sit; thou wilt never
Persuade me; already my heart is impatient to help
The Trojans, who sorely long for me now I am gone.
But rouse thou this man and let him make speed of himself,
To overtake me while yet in the city I am.
For home do I mean to go, that I may behold
My servants, the wife that I love, and my little son;
For I know not whether to them I shall ever return,
Or whether I die this day at the hands of the Argives.'
So saying, away went bright-plum'd Hector, and came
With speed to his well-built house; but there in his halls
He found not white-arm'd Andromache. She with her child

And a serving-woman clad in a beauteous robe,
Weeping and wailing had taken her stand on the wall.
So Hector, not finding his peerless wife within doors,
Went and stood on the threshold and said to the maids of the
house:

'Come, ye maids of the household, and answer me true:
Whither out of my halls is the white-arm'd Andromache gone?
Went she to the house of one of my sisters, or haply
To visit one of my brothers' lovely-robed wives?
Or Athena's shrine, where the rest of the women of Troy
The dread Goddess are seeking now to placate?'
Then a busy housekeeper spake to him, saying to him:
'Since, Hector, thou strictly biddest us answer thee true,
She is gone not to the house of one of thy sisters
Nor to visit one of thy brothers' lovely-robed wives,
Nor Athena's shrine, where the rest of the women of Troy
The dread Goddess are seeking now to placate;
She has climb'd the great wall of Ilios, since she had heard
That the Trojans were press'd, and the Argives winning the
day.

Away to the wall she made haste, as if out of her mind;
And along with her is the nursemaid, holding the child.'

So the housekeeper spake, and Hector sped back from the
house

The way he had come by, over the well-built streets.
Now when, as he cross'd the great city, he came to the gate,
The Scaean gate, for he meant to go back to the plain,
His wife, many-gifted Andromache, ran to his side;
The daughter she was of Ætion, noble of heart,
A man who had made under forested Placus his home,
In Thebe-by-Placus, and rul'd the Cilician men.
His daughter it was that Hector, the bronze-clad, had wed.
She now came to meet him; a handmaid walk'd at her side
Holding a child to her breast, his own little son,
The darling of Hector's heart, like a beautiful star.
Scamandrius, Hector call'd him; but all of the rest
Astyanax, seeing that Hector alone was the guard
Of Ilios town. And Hector, beholding the child,
Was silent and smil'd; but Andromache came to his side
And held him close, and the tears stream'd forth from her eyes;
And she clasp'd his hand in her own and spake to him thus:
'Dear heart, this valour of thine will be thy undoing,
No pity thou hast for thy little one here, nor for me,
Poor wretch that I am, and that soon thy widow shall be;

For soon shall the Argives all set upon thee in a band
And put thee to death; and better it were for me,
If I should lose thee, to go to my grave, for no more
Shall I have comfort, when thou hast gone to thy doom,
But grief only. Nor father nor mother have I;
My father was slain by the goodly Achilles, who laid
Utterly waste the Cilicians' well-peopled town,
High-gated Thebe. Eetion slew he in truth,
Yet did he not despoil him, for awe held him back;
But he burn'd him clad as he was in his rich-graven armour,
And over him heap'd up a barrow, where nymphs of the hills,
Daughters of shield-bearing Zeus, set elm-trees about.
As for the seven brothers I had in our halls,
All in a single day to the underworld went;
For the goodly Achilles, the swift-footed, slaughter'd them all
Amidst their slow-footed kine and their white-coated sheep.
And my mother, that under forested Placus was queen,
He brought to this place along with the rest of the spoil,
But freed her thereafter for ransom innumerable;
Yet Artemis put her to death in her father's halls.
Hector, thou art my father, my mother art thou
And my brother too and my husband stalwart in might.
Come now, have pity on me and abide on the wall,
And make not thy child an orphan, a widow thy wife.
By the wild fig-tree halt thou the host, where the town
Is most easy to scale, and the wall invites an assault.
Thrice there have the best of them tried to break in,
With the Ajaxes both and Idomeneus brave in the fight
And the sons of Atreus and Tydeus' valiant son;
Perhaps one skill'd in soothsaying gave them a hint,
Or haply their own spirit has driven them there.'

Then Hector the great, the bright-plum'd, spake to her thus:
'That is my concern, dear wife; I were strangely ashamed
The Trojans to meet, and their wives in their trailing robes,
If here like a coward I skulk'd aloof from the fray.
My own heart will not let me; for aye have I learn'd
To be brave, and amid the foremost Trojans to fight,
In quest of my father's great glory and eke of mine own.
For this do I know for sure in my heart and my soul:
There shall be a day when holy Ilios falls
And with Priam the people of Priam with good ashen spear.
Yet not so much does the grief of the Trojans hereafter
Move me, nor Hecuba's, even, nor Priam the King's,
Nor my brothers' grief, who, many and brave though they be,

Shall fall in the dust, laid low by the foemen's hands,
As thine own grief, when one of the bronze-coated Argives
Shall lead thee weeping away, thy liberty lost.
For some other woman in Argos thou'lt work at the loom,
From Messeis carry water, or else Hypereia,
Hating thy task, and strong necessity bind thee.
And someone shall say of thee then, beholding thy tears:
"That is the wife of Hector, unmatch'd in the fray
Of all horse-taming Trojans that fought about Ilios town."
So shall he say; and for thee fresh grief there shall be
To want for a man like me to keep thee from bondage.
But let me be dead, let the heap'd earth cover me up
Ere ever I hear thy cries as they drag thee away.'

So saying, the glorious Hector stretch'd out his arms
To the child; but back to the breast of his fair-girdled nurse
He shrank with a cry, for his dear father's look made him fear;
Affrighted he was by the bronze and the horse-hair plume
As he mark'd how grimly it waved from the top of the helm.
Then laugh'd his dear father and lady mother aloud;
And glorious Hector took the helm from his head
And set it upon the ground, where brightly it gleam'd.
But he kiss'd his dear son and fondled him in his arms
Then in prayer to Zeus and the rest of the Gods did he speak:
'O Zeus and ye other Gods, grant that this boy of mine here
May be even as I am, surpassing all others in Troy,
As brave and as strong, and firmly o'er Ilios rule.
And let him be call'd, as back he shall come from the war,
A better man than his father; and let him bring back
The spoils of the foe he has slain, and gladden his mother.'
So saying, within the arms of the wife that he lov'd
He plac'd his child, and she took him with smiling and tears,
To her sweet-smelling bosom. Her husband, pitying, mark'd
it

And, stroking her with his hand, he address'd her and said:
'Dear wife, grieve not for me too much in thy heart;
No man shall send me below if it be not my time;
Yet from doom, methinks, no man has ever escap'd,
Whether coward or brave, when once he has come to this life.
But do thou go home and busy thyself with thy tasks,
Thy loom and thy distaff, and bid the women about thee
Attend to their work; but war is the business of men,
Everyman's business in Ilios, mine most of all.'
So glorious Hector spake, and took up his helm
With its horse-hair crest; but homeward his dear wife went,

With many a backward glance and many a tear.
And soon thereafter she came to the well-built house
Of manslaying Hector, and there her handmaids she found
In many a band, and she made them all to lament;
In his own house they lamented for Hector alive,
For they deem'd that he from the dreadful fray would return
Never again, nor escape the hands of the Argives.
Not long Alexander delay'd in his high-built house,
But, donning his glorious armour, figur'd with bronze,
He sped through the city, trusting his fleetness of foot.
Like a stall'd horse that, fed to the full at his manger,
Breaks loose from his halter, stampeding over the plain,
Glad at heart, for his wont is to bathe in the fair-flowing river;
High does he hold up his head, and about him his mane
On his shoulders streams out; in his glory he trusts; and his
knees

Bear him fleetly away to the haunts and pastures of mares:
So Priam's son Paris down from high Pergamus came
Resplendent in armour, like to the light of the sun,
And laughing aloud as his swift feet carried him on.
Soon he met Hector, his brother, who then was about
To turn back from the place where late he commun'd with his
wife.

And the first to speak was godlike Paris, and said:
'Thou wouldst speed on ahead, brother; I, with my lingering
gait,

Delay thee, not coming in time, as thou gavest command.'
Then in answer to him spake bright-plum'd Hector, and said:
'No-one, brother, who thinks what is proper and right,
Would despise what thou dost in the fray, for valiant thou art;
Yet thou purposely slackest and hast no care; and for that
Is the heart in me griev'd whenever I hear thee revil'd
By Trojans who suffer for thy sake labour full great.
But let us be gone; hereafter for this we'll atone,
If Zeus shall grant us to set in our halls for the Gods
That for ever are in the skies, a deliverance-bowl
When from Troyland we shall have driven the well-greav'd
Achaeans.'

Ajax meets Hector in single combat. A respite while the dead are burned. The Achaeans build a wall to protect their ships.

So spake glorious Hector and strode through the gate
 With his brother Paris beside him, and each in his heart
 Was eager to fight with the long-hair'd Achaeans again;
 And, e'v'n as the Storm-god sends a following wind
 To longing sailors weary of beating the main
 With their polish'd oars, for their limbs with toil are foredone,
 So welcome at need these two to the Trojans appear'd.
 Then slew Paris the son of Areithous
 The mace-man dwelling in Arne—Menesthius, he
 Whom Areithous of Phylomedusa begat;
 And Hector smote with his spear lord Eioneus
 On the neck, 'neath the rim of his helmet and loosen'd his knees.
 And Glaucus, the Lycian chief, Hippolochus' son,
 Iphinous smote with his lance in the mellay of men,
 Dexios' son, as behind his horses he sprang,
 And he fell from his chariot to earth and his knees were
 unstrung.

But soon as the Goddess, grey-eyed Athena, had mark'd
 How the Argives fell in the murderous mellay of war,
 At once from the peaks of Olympus she darted her way;
 Troyward she went, and Apollo from Pergamon's height
 To meet her arose, desiring victory for Troy;
 Without the ramparts beside the oak-tree they met,
 And Apollo, the own son of Zeus, Athena address'd:
 'Why so eagerly, daughter of all-ruling Zeus,
 Art thou come from Olympus? What mighty purpose is
 thine?
 'Tis surely to weigh down the scales for the Danaan host,
 For Troy and her people that perish thou pitiest not.
 Yet consider how far my counsel is better than thine;
 Make we an end of the ruinous fight for the day,
 And hereafter again they shall fight till the goal they have
 reach'd
 Of Ilion, seeing that so ye Goddesses will
 And your purpose it is to lay her low in the dust.'

And him did grey-eyed Athena in answer address:
'So be it, Apollo; in this mind came I myself
From Olympus on high 'mid the Trojan and Danaan hosts.
Come, how thinkest thou then the battle to stay?'
And her did the lord Apollo answer again:
'Rouse we the stalwart spirit of horse-taming Hector
To challenge one of the Danaans singly to fight
And slay him in deadly combat or perish himself;
So might the bronze-greav'd Achaeans be jealous thereat
And stir up some warrior with Hector singly to fight.'

He spake, and the grey-eyed Goddess hearing obey'd;
And Helenus, son of Priam, in spirit divin'd
The plan that the heavenly pair had together approv'd
And went and, standing by Hector, a word to him spake:
'Hector, thou son of Priam, in courage a God,
Lend me thy ear, for thy own brother am I;
Make thee the Trojans and all the Achaeans to sit
And challenge the best of their champions singly to fight
And slay thee in deadly combat or perish himself.
Thou art not fated as yet to be stricken and die;
For thus spake a voice of the Gods that in spirit I heard.'
So spake he and Hector rejoic'd his saying to hear
And stepp'd in their midst and the Trojan battalions refrain'd,
Grasping his spear by the middle, and all of them sat.
And King Agamemnon made the Achaeans to sit,
And Athena too with Apollo, Lord of the bow,
In the likeness of vultures sat on the top of the oak
Sacred to all-ruling Zeus, and watch'd the event
Rejoicing; and close together were seal'd the ranks,
Bristling with shields and helmets and bronze-headed spears,
And ev'n as, when Zephyrus rises, a ripple is spread
O'er the glassy deep and the wave grows black underneath
So did the ranks of the Trojans and Danaans sit
On the plain, and Hector between them spake to the hosts:
'Ye Trojans and well-greav'd Achaeans, hearken to me
While I utter the thought that my spirit stirs in my breast;
High-thron'd Cronion fulfill'd not our pledges of truce
But evil still he ordains for both of our hosts
Till ye either capture the towers of bastion'd Troy
Or yourselves by your sea-going ships be vanquish'd by us.
But, seeing that among you the chiefest in Argos there are,
Whomso his spirit may urge to contend with me now
Let him step in the midst and 'gainst Hector your champion be.
And this I declare, and let Zeus be our witness herein;

If that champion slay me with long-edg'd sword or with spear,
My arms let him strip and take to your camp by the ships
But send my body to Troy, that of funeral fire
The Trojans and Trojans' wives may give me my dues.
But if I slay him and Apollo my glory exalt,
His arms will I strip and to holy Ilion take
And hang in the shrine of Apollo, the far-shooting God,
But himself I will send to the Danaan camp by the ships
That his long-hair'd Achaeon comrades his bones may entomb
And build him a barrow beside the broad Hellespont;
Then will one say of the men that hereafter shall be
As he sails in his well-bench'd ship o'er the violet sea:
"This is the barrow of one that long has been dead,
A champion whom glorious Hector slew with the sword."
So will he say, and thus my glory shall live.'

He spake, and they all were silent, holding their peace,
To refuse the challenge asham'd yet afraid to accept,
And at last rose up Menelaus and spake in their midst
And with railing upbraided them, groaning deep in his heart:
'Alack! Ye braggarts, Achaeon . . . women, not men,
Surely our shame it will be, ay, shame upon shame,
If none of the Danaan warriors the challenge accepts.
May all of you die and to earth and water return
That sit here like lifeless stocks, inglorious, dumb;
I will arm against Hector myself, for I know that on high
The hands of the Gods the threads of victory hold.'
So spake he and straightway his glorious armour did on,
And then, Menelaus, the end of thy life had appear'd
At the hands of Hector, for he was the stronger by far,
Had not the Danaan princes seiz'd thee and held
And Atrides himself, Agamemnon ruler of men,
Taken thy hand and spoken and call'd thee by name:
'Thou art mad, heav'n-born Menelaus, yet no time it is
For madness like this. Draw back, tho' griev'd in thy heart,
And think not for mere strife's sake with thy better to fight,
Hector of Troy, when others abhor him as thou.
Achilles himself has shudder'd with Hector to fight
In glorious battle, and he is thy better by far;
Go then and sit thee amidst the grain of thy friends,
And the host of Achaea another champion shall name
Who, fearless man tho' he be and insatiate of toil,
Will be only too fain, I doubt not, to rest on his knee
If indeed he escape from the fury of battle alive.'
So saying, the hero Atrides with reasoning just

Persuaded his brother's heart, and his henchmen at once
Took off from his shoulders the gleaming arms and were glad,
Then rose Nestor amid the Achaeans and spake:
'Alack! sore grief on the land of Achaea is come;
Surely the old Knight Peleus, in counsel and speech
The stay of the Myrmidon people, would groan in his heart.
He enquir'd of you all in his house and greatly rejoic'd
To hear of the noble parents and lineage of each,
But now, could he hear of you cow'd by the enemy's look,
Oft would he lift up his hands in prayer to the Gods
That his soul might depart from his limbs to the house of the
dead.

O Zeus and Athena and Phoebus, would I were young
As once when the Pylians by Celadon's swift-flowing stream
Muster'd to fight the Arcarians, men of the spear,
'Neath Pheia's walls in Iardanus' watery vale.
Then stood forth as their champion Ereuthalion,
Cloth'd in the armour of King Areithous,
Godlike Areithous, that in Arcadia
By men and fair-girdled women the mace-man was call'd
Because he fought not with bow or long-shadow'd spear
But clave with an iron mace the battalions of men;
Him noble Lycurgus by guile, not valour, o'ercame
In a narrow passage where nothing avail'd him his mace
To save from destruction, for princely Lycurgus ere that
Pierced through his breast with a spear and smote him to earth
And spoil'd of his arms, that brazen Ares had giv'n him,
And thereafter wore them himself in the mellay of war;
But at last Lycurgus, waxing old in his halls,
To his dear squire gave them to wear, to Ereuthalion,
And these were his arms when he challeng'd our bravest and
best

And they trembled with fear and no man dared to reply.
Yet my spirit of hardihood stirr'd me to fight with the man
In single combat, although I was youngest of all,
And I fought and Athena granted me glory to win;
He was the tallest and strongest of all I have slain
And lay in his hugeness sprawling o'er many a yard.
Were I but young and my strength unabated as then!
Quickly would bright-plum'd Hector his answer receive,
But of you that are princes and chiefs of the sons of Achaea
Not one in his heart is eager with Hector to fight.'
So chided the old man, and nine stood up when he sat;
Far foremost the King of men, Agamemnon, arose,

And after him Tydeus' son, stout Diomed, rose,
And the Ajaxes next, in valour impetuous cloth'd,
And after them Idomeneus and his brother-in-arms
Meriones, of manslaying Ares the peer,
Eurypylos next, Euaemon's glorious son,
And Thoas, Andraemon's son, and goodly Odysseus.
All these were fain with godlike Hector to fight,
And the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, address'd them again:
'Cast now the lots for the chosen name to appear;
For truly the chosen shall profit the well-greav'd Achaeans,
And his own soul also comfort and profit shall win
If indeed he escape from the fury of battle alive.'
He spake, and they mark'd their lots, each chieftain his own,
And in King Agamemnon's helmet cast them in turn,
And the host pray'd and lifted their hands to the Gods,
And thus would one say as he gaz'd to the heaven above:
'O Zeus, let the lot on Ajax or Diomed fall
Or else on the King of Mycene, city of gold.'

So spake they, and Nestor, the Knight Gerenian, shook
And there leapt from the helmet the lot that themselves had
desir'd,

Ajax' mark, and the herald went through the throng
And show'd it from left to right to the chiefs of Achaea,
And they knew it not and disown'd it, each in his turn;
But when through the host he had rang'd and the hero had
reach'd

That had mark'd it and thrown in the helmet, Ajax his hand
Held forth, and the herald approach'd and laid it therein;
And Ajax the token knew and rejoic'd in his heart.

Then at his feet to the earth he flung it and spake:
'Comrades, the lot is mine, and myself I am glad
In my own heart, for methinks I shall win in the fight.
But come now, while I my armour of battle put on,
Pray ye the while to Zeus Cronion the King

A silent petition, that none of the Trojans may hear,
Or even aloud, since we fear no man upon earth.
For none is so strong as to chase me, unwilling, by force,
Nor by skill can defeat me, since not so lacking in skill
Was Ajax, I hope, in Salamis nurtured and bred.'

He spake, and they prayed to Zeus Cronion, the King,
And thus would one say as he gaz'd on the heaven above:
'O Father on Ida thron'd, most glorious and great,
Give victory to Ajax and grant him glory to win,
Or if Hector thou lovest indeed and carest for him

Then equal prowess and glory grant to them both.'
So pray'd they and Ajax array'd him in glittering bronze
And when on his every limb he had put on his arms
Then mov'd he, as giant Ares moves on the field
When he marches to battle 'mong men that Cronion has set
To fight in the blind fury of heart-breaking strife;
So huge rose Ajax, Achaea's bulwark of war,
On his grim visage a smile, while his feet underneath
In great strides mov'd as he brandish'd his long-shadow'd spear.
And the Argives rejoic'd in their hearts to look upon him,
But trembling came on the Trojans in every limb
And the heart of manslaying Hector knock'd in his breast,
But nowise now could he shrink or retreat from his foe
To the throng of his comrades because of his challenge to him.
And Ajax approach'd him, bearing his shield like a tower,
Sevenfold oxhide that Tychius wrought by his craft—
The best of curriers was he and Hyla his home
Who wrought him his gleaming shield of sevenfold hide
Of full-grown bulls and o'erlaid the seven with bronze;
With this Telamonian Ajax guarded his breast
As he stood by Hector and utter'd a threatening word:
'Hector, now shalt thou learn in hand-to-hand fight
What manner of princes among the Achaeans there are
Ev'n tho' Achilles, that lionheart chief, be not here,
For he to his high-beak'd seafaring ships has retired
In anger 'gainst King Agamemnon, shepherd of men;
Yet we that are left are such as to face thee in arms
And many we are; but make thou beginning and fight.'

And him did bright-plum'd Hector in answer address:
'Heav'n-born Ajax Telamon, chieftain of men,
Make not trial of me like some timorous boy
Or a weak woman that knows not the business of war.
Of battle and manslaying much do I know from of old;
Now left, now right (behold me!) I know how to swing
My shield, 'tis the way of defence for a stout man of arms.
I know how to charge through the mellay of charioteers,
Or in hand-to-hand fight to Ares' music can sing.
Be warn'd then; I think not to spy an advantage o'er thee
But will openly strike if perchance my mark I may hit.'
So spake he and brandish'd and hurl'd his long-shadow'd spear
And Ajax's dread shield smote on the outermost bronze
O'er the sevenfold hide, and the layer of bronze was the eighth;
Through six of the folds went the tireless shattering point
But was stay'd by the seventh; and heav'n-born Ajax in turn

At Hector brandish'd and cast his long-shadow'd spear
And smote on the mighty orb of his sheltering shield;
Straight through the gleaming shield the point of it went
And, driving on through the breastplate's glittering work,
Pass'd close by his flank and tore the doublet away,
But the hero, swerving, avoided the imminent death.
Then both together their spears pluck'd forth with their hands
And grappled like ravening lions, hungry for meat,
Or boars of the wild whose strength no feebleness is;
Now Priam's son with his spear smote hard at the shield
Yet brake it not through, for the point was turn'd on the
bronze,

But Ajax, leaping, at Hector's buckler let drive
And the spear went through it and made him reel in his charge
And cleft its way to his neck and the blood from him gush'd.
Yet ev'n so bright-plum'd Hector ceas'd not from fight
But, yielding his ground, in his strong hand gather'd and flung
A stone that lay on the plain, black, rugged, and huge,
And on Ajax's dread shield of sevenfold oxhide it smote
In the midst of the boss, and the bronze resounded thereon.
Next Ajax snatch'd up a stone, far greater, and swung
And hurl'd it at Hector, with force immeasurable,
And the rock like a millstone shatter'd the round of his shield
And beat down his knees, and he lay there, crush'd underneath,
Flat on his back, but Apollo rais'd him again.
And now had they drawn their swords and at hand to hand
fought

But the heralds approach'd, the spokesmen of Zeus and of men,
He of the bronze-mail'd Achaeans, Talthylbius,
And he of the Trojans, Idaeus, wise men and grave,
And between them stretch'd out their staves, and the herald of
Troy

Idaeus, a sage man in counsel, a word to them spake:
'Fight ye no more, dear sons, but rest ye a while,
Well lov'd are ye both of Zeus that gathers the clouds,
And both are stout men of arms, we know it full well.
The night is upon us; 'tis good night's summons to hear.'

And him Telamonian Ajax in answer address'd:
'Idaeus, let Hector be first to speak of a truce,
For 'twas he that challeng'd to mortal combat our best.
Let him then be first, and I will follow his lead.'
And bright-plum'd Hector to him made answer and spake:
'Ajax, the Gods have endow'd thee with stature and strength
And wisdom, and thou above all with the spear dost excel;

Let us therefore cease for the day from battle and strife
And fight hereafter till God the issue decide
Twixt thee and me and to one of us victory give,
For the night is upon us, 'tis good night's summons to hear,
That so thou rejoice the Achaean host by the ships
And chiefly thy kinsmen and comrades, all that are thine,
And I will return to the city of Priam the King
And the Trojans rejoice and the long-rob'd women of Troy
That methinks will enter the holy assembly with prayer.
But come, let us give to each other glorious gifts,
That thus men may say, Achaean and Trojan alike:
"These, having fought for the sake of heart-breaking strife,
Have made their peace and in friendship parted again."

So Hector spake, and his great sword silver-emboss'd
With scabbard and well-cut baldric to Ajax he gave,
And Ajax gave in return his bright-purple belt.
They parted, and one went back to the Danaan ranks
And one to the throng of the Trojans, who greatly rejoic'd
To see him returning sound and alive to his folk,
Deliver'd from Ajax's rage and invincible hands,
And brought him home to the city, sav'd beyond hope;
But Ajax, elate with victory, the well-greav'd Achaeans
Escorted to Lord Agamemnon, glad in their hearts.
But when to the huts of godlike Atrides they came,
The King of men, Agamemnon, slew them an ox,
A male for almighty Cronion, five winters old,
And they skinn'd it and dress'd it and quickly divided it all
And cunningly carv'd it and, piercing the slices on spits,
Carefully roasted and drew off all from the fire.
So made they an end of their toil and, the banquet prepared,
They ate and were stinted in nought of the generous feast,
And the hero Atrides, the high King, honour'd in chief
Ajax and gave him the unbroken chine for himself.
But when they had sated desire both of meat and of drink,
Then first did the old man begin his counsel to weave,
Nestor, whose rede from of old they had proven the best;
He now with kindly intent harangued them and spake:
'Atrides, and all ye others, princes and chiefs,
Seeing that many of the long-hair'd Achaeans are dead
Whose crimson blood by Scamander's fair-flowing streams
Ares has shed, and their spirits to Hades have gone,
Therefore behoves us with daybreak the battle to stay
And ourselves assemble together the corpses to wheel
On wains of oxen and mules and burn them with fire

A little way from the ships, that each man may show
The bones to his children when home we return at the last;
And a tomb round the pyre let us heap, to rise from the plain,
One barrow for all, and build we also with speed
High towers, a bulwark to be for our ships and ourselves,
And gates, well-fitting and stout, let us set in the midst
That through them a road there may be for the charioteers,
And without let us dig a deep trench under the wall,
Horses and footmen to check round the circle of walls,
Lest the war of the Trojans hereafter be heavy on us.'

So spake he, and all the princes assented thereto,
But meanwhile by Priam's gateway in Ilion town
The Trojans in panic disorder in council were met,
And among them the wise Antenor open'd debate:
'Hear me, ye Trojans and Dardans and allies of ours,
While I utter the thought that the spirit stirs in my breast:
Argive Helen with all her wealth let us yield
To the two Atridae, for now we are false to our oaths
And as oath-breakers fight, and therein is no profit for us
Yet to be hoped for if Helen we give not to them.'
So spake he and sate him down and among them arose
Godlike Paris that fair-hair'd Helen had wed
And made sharp answer and winged words to him spake:
'Antenor, I like not at all this saying of thine,
For many a better rede dost thou know in thy heart.
But if truly thou speakest in earnest the word thou hast said,
Then must the Gods themselves thy wits have destroy'd.
But I to the horse-taming Trojans my mind will declare,
And declare it outright, that Helen I will not restore,
But the wealth that from Argos, her home, I brought to my
house

All that I am willing to give and will add of my own.'

So spake he and sate him down and among them arose
Priam of Dardanus' seed, in counsel a God,
Who now with kindly intent harangued them and spake:
'Hear me, ye Trojans and Dardans and allies of ours,
While I utter the thought that the spirit stirs in my breast:
Eat now your supper in Troy as was ever your wont
And keep good watch and be wakeful every man,
And at dawn Idaeus shall go to the camp by the ships
And to King Agamemnon and brave Menelaus report
The saying of Paris, for whose sake strife is arisen,
And likewise enquire if the Danaans are minded, as we,
To cease from tumultuous war till our dead we have buried,

And thereafter again we will fight till the God shall decide
'Twixt them and us and to one of us victory grant.'
He spake, and they heard him gladly and straightway obey'd
And their supper throughout the city by companies took,
And at Dawn Idaeus went to the well-timber'd ships.
There found he assembled in council the Danaan chiefs
By the stern of Atrides' ship, and he stood in their midst
And, uttering his clear voice, address'd the Achaeans and
spake:

'Atrides and all ye others, chiefs of Achaea,
King Priam and all the Trojans, princes and folk,
Bid me declare, an it please you the message to hear,
The saying of Paris, for whose sake strife is arisen:
The wealth that from Argos he brought on his seafaring ships
When he sail'd to Troyland—would that ere then he had
died!—

All this he is willing to give and to add of his own.
But the wedded wife of Lord Menelaus he says
That he will not restore, tho' the Trojans counsel him so:
And they bade me enquire if ye Danaans are minded, as we,
To cease from tumultuous war till our dead we have burn'd,
And thereafter again we will fight till the God shall decide
'Twixt you and us and to one of us victory grant.'

He spake and they all were silent, holding their peace,
But at last the stalwart Diomed spake in their midst:
'Let none of us now of Paris' substance accept
Nor take back Helen, for ev'n to a babe it is known
That already the threads of doom on the Trojans are knit.'
So spake he and all the Achaeans shouted assent
And applauded the saying of Diomed, tamer of horses,
And Lord Agamemnon thus Idaeus address'd:
'Idaeus, thou hearest thyself the Danaans' word;
Their answer thou hast, and 'tis pleasing also to me.
But as touching the dead, I grudge not their burning to you;
No stinting surely for dead men's corpses should be,
When once they are dead, to appease them swiftly with fire.
For the oaths let Zeus be our witness that thunders on high.'
So saying, his sceptre he rais'd in the sight of the Gods,
And Idaeus, departing, to holy Ilium return'd.
There Trojans and Dardans in full assembly were met
To await Idaeus' return, and the herald approach'd
And came and stood in their midst and his message declar'd;
And they made them ready for either errand with speed,
Some to bring in the corpses and others the wood,

And the Argives also went from the well-timber'd ships
And hasten'd to bring in the corpses and others the wood.
While yet the new-risen Sun o'er the fields of the earth
Shone and from Ocean's gentle deep-flowing stream
Clomb to the heaven, the two hosts met on the plain;
Hard was it then each fallen comrade to know
But, washing them clean of the clotted gore on their limbs,
They knew them and, weeping hot tears, rais'd them on to the
wains.

Now Priam forbade them to wail, so in silence they heap'd
The corpses high on the pyre, tho' grieving at heart,
And burn'd them with fire and to holy Ilion return'd.
So likewise over against them the well-greav'd Achaeans
Their comrades heap'd on the pyre, tho' grieving at heart,
And burn'd them with fire and return'd to the camp by the
ships.

Day was not yet, but still 'twas the twilight of dawn,
When chosen men of the Danaans were muster'd afield
And heap'd up a tomb round the pyre, to rise from the plain,
One barrow for all, and likewise they builded with speed
High towers, a bulwark to be for their ships and themselves;
And gates, well-fitting and stout, they set in their midst
That through them a road there might be for the charioteers,
And dug there a great trench also under the wall,
Both broad and deep, and a strong palisade in it set.
So labour'd the long-hair'd Achaeans to finish their task
While the Gods round the Lord of lightning sat and beheld
And marvell'd the mighty work of the Danaans to see.
And Poseidon the Earth-shaker spake among them and said:
'Father, lives there a man o'er the far-spreading earth
That still to the Gods his mind and his counsel will show?
Seest thou not how the long-hair'd Achaeans again
Have built them a wall and driven a trench round their ships,
Yet ask'd not our leave nor burn'd to us hecatombs meet?
The fame of their fortress will verily spread as the dawn,
And men will that other forget that Apollo and I
For the hero Laomedon builded with travail and toil.'
And him did the Cloud-compeller in anger address:
'Alack, strong Shaker of Earth, for the thing thou hast said!
Well might any save thee be afraid at the thought,
One that were feeble than thou in the strength of his hands,
For verily thy fame shall spread on the wings of the dawn.
Rise thou, when once the long-hair'd Achaeans again
Shall fare in their ships to their own dear country afar,

And shatter their wall and scatter it into the sea
And cover the great sea-beaches again with their sands,
That the Danaans' mighty fortress be quite blotted out.'

So spake the two Immortals in converse together,
And the Sun went down and the Danaans finish'd their task
And slaughter'd kine through the camp and their supper pre-
par'd.

Now Lemnian ships were in harbour, freighted with wine,
Traders that Jason's son, Euneus, had sent
(Hypsipyle bore him to Jason, shepherd of men),
And chiefly for King Agamemnon and brave Menelaus
Was a cargo of wine, a thousand measures, aboard;
And thence the long-hair'd Achaeans bought them their wine,
Some with payment of bronze and others with iron,
Some with oxhides and others with oxen unslain,
Yet others with slaves, and they made them a bounteous feast.
So all night long the Achaeans sat at the feast,
Ev'n as the Trojans and allies feasted in Troy,
And all night long did Zeus bode evil for them,
Pealing his thunder, and pale fear rul'd in their hearts,
And they spilt on the earth from their cups, nor durst any drink
Ere he pour'd libation of wine to all-ruling Zeus;
Then lay they to rest and the boon of slumber enjoy'd.

Zeus forbids the Gods to take part in the war and himself grants victory to the Trojans.

AND now was the golden dawn o'erspreading the earth
 When Zeus, whose joy is in thunder, a council of Gods
 On the outermost peak of ridgy Olympus let call,
 And himself harangued them while they sat listening to him;
 'Give ear to my words, ye Gods and Goddesses all,
 While I utter the thought and the purpose that stir in my
 breast;

One thing let none of you, male or female, essay,
 To set my saying at nought, but all in accord
 Approve it, that this my intent I may quickly fulfil;
 Whomso I see of you Gods that is minded to go
 And help either Trojans or Danaans, apart from the rest,
 Shall he in no seemly sort to Olympus return,
 Or ev'n I will take him and hurl to the darkness of hell
 Far from this pleasance, the deepest abyss under earth;
 There are the iron gates and the threshold of bronze
 As far under Hades as heaven is high above earth.
 There shall he feel how far I am greatest in power;
 Go to, make trial, ye Gods, that all ye may know,
 Hang ye a rope of gold from Olympus to earth
 And haul on it strongly, ye Gods and Goddesses all,
 Yet could ye not pull to the ground wise-counselling Zeus
 Of Lords supreme, no, not though ye labour'd full sore.
 But were I once minded to haul on the rope with a will,
 You all with the earth and the sea should I draw up with ease,
 And then round a spur of Olympus the rope would I bind
 And all this world that ye see should be hanging in space.
 So far above Gods, so far above mortals am I.'

So spake he, and all became silent, holding their peace,
 In amaze at his speech, for strong were the words that he us'd;
 But at last spake out the Goddess, grey-eyed Athena:
 'Cronion, Father of all of us, highest of Lords,
 Well do we know of ourselves that thy might never yields,
 And yet for the Danaan spearmen pity we have
 Who now shall perish, fulfilling an evil fate.
 Yet, even as thou dost bid us, from war we will keep,

Though giving the Argives our counsel, to be for their weal,
Lest all should perish because of this anger of thine.'
Then smiling spake to her Zeus that gathers the clouds:
'Take heart, dear child, Triton-born, for in no wise I speak
With full intent, but to thee I desire to be kind.'
So saying, he yok'd to his chariot his bronze-hoov'd steeds,
Fleet-footed; of gold were the flowing manes on their necks,
Golden the arms on himself, and golden the whip,
Well-twin'd, that he grasp'd in his hand. And he mounted the
car

And lash'd the horses, and nothing loath did they fly
In the middle space 'twixt the earth and the star-spangled
heaven,

And to fountain'd Ida he came, nurse-mother of beasts,
Where his precinct and fragrant altar on Gargarus stood.
There stay'd he his horses, the Father of Gods and of men,
And loos'd from the yoke and a thick mist over them shed
And himself on the mountain's summit glorying sat
As he gaz'd on the city of Troy and the Danaan ships.

But soon as the long-hair'd Achaeans had taken their meal
In haste by the huts, they order'd themselves for the fight
And the Trojans over against them arm'd them in Troy,
A scantier host, yet for all that eager to fight,
By necessity driven, for their children's sake and their wives'.
And the portals were open'd wide and the host issued forth,
Footmen and horsemen, and loud was the din that arose.
And soon as the battle was join'd and together they met,
Then clasp'd they shield-hide and spear and the fury of men,
Bronze-coated warriors, and high-boss'd shields on each other
Press'd hard, and dreadful indeed was the din that arose;
For the voices of groaning and triumph together were blent,
Men slaying and slain, and the black earth stream'd with their
blood.

While yet 'twas morning and waxing still was the day
So long did they strike at each other and warriors fall,
But, soon as the Sun-God the midmost heaven bestrode,
Then did the Father his golden balances hang
And set in the scales two lots of outstretching death,
One for the Trojans and one for the bronze-mail'd Achaeans,
And pois'd, and Achaea's day sank down in the scale.
So lay the Achaeans' fate on the bounteous earth
And the fate of the Trojans was lifted high to the heav'n,
And the God from the summit of Ida thunder'd aloud
And his blazing levin amidst the Danaans hurl'd,

And they saw it and marvell'd and pale fear seiz'd on them all.
Then Idomeneus bode not, nor King Agamemnon,
Nor the Ajaxes twain, of Ares' company, stood;
Nestor alone, the Achaeans' Warden, abode,
Nor he of his own free will, but his horse was fordone
That godlike Paris whom fair-hair'd Helen had wed
Had shot on the crest, where the foremost hairs of a horse
Grow out from the top of the skull, and wounding is death;
And the steed in his agony leapt, for the shaft in his brain
Pierc'd deep, and the yoke-horses rear'd as he writh'd o'er his
wound.

And ev'n as the old man was hewing the traces away
With a sweep of his sword, came Hector's fleet-footed team
Bearing a bold charioteer through the tumult of fight,
Hector; and now had the old man been reft of his life
But Diomed, stalwart in battle, was swift to perceive
And call'd with a terrible shout Odysseus to him:
'Heav'n-born son of Laertes, wily Odysseus,
Where goest thou, turning thy back 'mid the cowardly throng?
Beware lest one plant, as thou fleest, a spear in thy back;
Nay, stand, till we thrust from the old man his furious foe.'

So spake he, but godlike Odysseus heeded him not
But hasten'd by him and made for the camp by the ships,
And Tydides stood 'mong the foremost fighters, alone,
In front of the horses of Nestor, Gerenian Knight,
And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
'Old man, of a truth young warriors harry thee sore,
And thy force is abated and old age heavy on thee,
And thy charioteer is a weakling, thy horses are slow.
Come then, mount thou my chariot and see with thine eyes
How skill'd are the horses of Tros to follow or flee
Hither and thither at full speed over the plain,
The team that I took from Aeneas, deviser of rout,
Thine let us leave to our squires, and these others drive
Straight at the horsetaming Trojans, that Hector may know
Whether my spear also rages with power in my hands.'
He spake, and the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, obey'd;
Nestor's horses the squires drave out of the fight,
Valiant Sthenelus, kindly Eurymedon,
And the two chieftains mounted on Diomed's car;
And Nestor grasp'd in his hands the glittering reins,
And started the horses, and Hector they quickly approach'd.
And Diomed cast at the Trojan his long-shadow'd spear;
Him did he miss, but his squire that the chariot drove,

Eniopeus, Thebaeus' high-hearted son,
As he stood with the reins in his hand by the nipple he smote,
And he fell from the car, and the fleet-footed horses at once
Started and swerv'd, and his spirit and strength were unstrung.
Dread grief Hector possess'd for his charioteer;
But he left him lying, tho' sore for his comrade he griev'd,
And drove in quest of a driver, nor was it for long
That his chariot lack'd for a reinsman, for quickly he found
Archeptolemus, Iphitus' bold-hearted son,
Who mounted the car and the bright reins grasp'd in his hands.
Then had ruin and doom irreparable
Been wrought and the Trojans like lambs in the city been
penn'd,

But the Father of Gods and of men was swift to perceive
And with thunderous peal his white-flaming levin he hurl'd
To the earth at the feet of Diomed's fleet-footed steeds,
And dread was the flame of burning sulphur that rose
And the horses, afraid, shrank cowering under the car;
And Nestor let fall from his hands the glittering reins
And had fear in his heart and a word to Diomed spake:
'Come, Tydides, turn thou the horses to flight,
For thou seest how the favour of Zeus has departed from thee.
To Hector the glory he gives for this day at least,
But hereafter to us, if he will, shall the glory return;
Man may not wrest from its aim the purpose of Zeus,
How valiant soever he be; for Zeus is supreme.'

And Diomed, stalwart in battle, answer'd and spake:
'Yea, vainly, sire, all this thou hast spoken aright;
But this is the bitter grief that enters my soul,
That some day, haranguing the Trojans, Hector shall say:
"Tydides in flight before me return'd to the ships."
That day may the wide earth gape and swallow me up.'
And the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, answer'd again:
'Go to, now, thou son of Tydeus, why sayest thou thus?
Even if Hector shall call thee a coward and base
No man, Trojan or Dardan, that word will believe
Nor the wives of the great-hearted Trojans that carry the shield
Whose lusty bedfellows thy hand has laid in the dust.'
So spake he, and turning his whole-hoov'd horses to flight
Went back through the throng, and the Trojans and Hector in
chief

With a wondrous uproar their dolorous darts on him rain'd,
And over him Hector cried with a far-reaching shout:
'Tydides, the swift-hors'd Achaeans have honour'd thee most

With a seat at the banquet and meats and full-flowing cups,
But now they will scorn thee, for weak as a woman thou art.
Begone, poor minion, for not through flinching of mine
Shalt thou scale Troy's rampart or carry her women away
In thy seafaring ships; ere then I will deal thee thy fate.'
So spake he, and Tydeus' son was divided in mind
Whether to wheel his chariot and face him in fight;
Thrice in his innermost heart did he ponder thereon,
And thrice from the mountain did great Zeus thunder aloud
To the Trojans a sign that the tide of battle had turn'd.

And Hector call'd to the Trojans with far-reaching shouts:
'Ye Trojans and Lycians and Dardans that fight in the press,
Quit you like men, your impetuous valour recall;
Hear ye how Zeus by his thunder has signall'd to me
Victory and glory, but woe to the Danaan men.
Fools! that devis'd and fashion'd these impotent walls,
Mere wood and plaster, that cannot our fury withhold,
And their deep-delv'd trench my horses will lightly o'erleap;
But when once I am come in the midst of their well-built
ships,

Then be our thought on the fury of ravening fire
That their vessels with fire I may burn and slaughter their men
As they cower by the seagoing ships bewilder'd by smoke.'
So spake he and straightway call'd to his horses aloud:
'Xanthus and thou, Podargus, and Aethon and Lampus,
Repay now your nurture, the rich abundance of food
That Andromache, daughter of great-hearted Eëtion,
Would set before you, the honey-sweet grain of the corn,
The mingling of wine to drink, whensoever ye list,
Ere ever her lusty husband's table she set.
Pursue now these horsemen with speed, that the shield we may
take

Of Nestor, the fame whereof now reaches to heav'n
How 'tis of gold altogether, armrods and all,
And likewise from horsetaming Diomed's shoulders may strip
The daedal cuirass, that Hephaestus cunningly wrought.
Could we but capture these prizes, then might we hope
That the Argives this very night might embark on their ships.'

So spake he vaunting, and Hera in heaven was wroth
And stirr'd on her throne, and Olympus quak'd as she moved,
And thus she address'd the great God Poseidon and spake:
'Out on it, Shaker of earth, dost thou, even thou,
Feel for the Argives that perish no pity or ruth?
Yet they to thy altars in Aegae and Helice bring

Gifts many and fair, and thou gavest them victory of old.
If we that are leagued with the Danaans were minded e'en now
To beat off the Trojans, defying the purpose of Zeus,
Then, sitting on Ida alone, should he helplessly pine.'
And to her did the Shaker of earth, sore troubled, reply:
'O Hera, headstrong in speech, what a word thou hast said!
I am not he that would set the Immortals at strife
With Cronian Zeus, for his arm is stronger than ours.'

So spake they together in converse, Goddess and God.
And now was the leaguer between the wall and the ships
Fill'd full of horses together, and shield-bearing men;
So penn'd them Hector, the peer of Ares in speed,
Great son of Priam, when Zeus gave glory to him.
And now with ravening fire the ships he had burn'd
If Hera had mov'd not the mind of Atrides the King
To bestir him and speedily rouse the Achaeans to fight;
And he went through the huts and the ships of the Danaan
camp

Holding a great cloak of purple and taking his stand
On the huge black ship of Odysseus midmost the line
So that right and left to the furthestmost ends they might hear,
He cried with far-reaching voice to the Danaan host:
'Fie on you, Argives, fair-seeming base things of shame.
Where now is our vaunt when we said that the bravest we were,
The boast that in Lemnos ye made vaingloriously
When ye ate of the flesh of tall-horn'd oxen and drank
From mixing-bowls brimming with wine as ye sat at the feast
And said that each one would stand 'gainst a hundred or more
Of the Trojans in battle, yet now ev'n by one are outmatch'd,
This Hector, that quickly with fire our timbers will burn?
O Zeus, didst thou ever before such blindness as this
Send on a sceptred King and his glory abase?
Never, methinks, any altar of thine did I pass
In my well-bench'd ship on this mad journey of mine
But the fat and the thighbones of oxen I burn'd on them all
Being eager to raze to the ground the rampart of Troy.
Hearken, O Zeus, and fulfil thou this my desire;
Grant that ourselves at least may escape with our lives
Nor suffer the Danaan host thus vanquish'd to be.'
He spake, and the Father had pity to see him in tears
And vouchsafed his people to spare and to save them from
death;

And straightway sent he an eagle, the surest of signs,
With a fawn in its talons, the young of a fleet-footed hind,

And the fawn he let fall by the beautiful altar of Zeus
Where the host to the Lord of omens sacrifice made,
And they, when they saw that the bird was an omen indeed,
Rallied and knew the joy of battle again.
Then could none of the Danaans, tho' many they were,
Boast that before Tydides he drove o'er the trench
His fleet-footed horses or fought with his man on the field;
He was the first a Trojan warrior to slay,
Phradmon's son Agelaus, turning to flee,
But ev'n as he turn'd he planted the spear in his back
Between his shoulders and drave it straight through his breast,
And he fell from the car and his armour clang'd as he fell.
And after him came the Atridae, rulers of men,
And the Ajaxes next, in valour impetuous cloth'd,
And after them Idomeneus and his brother in arms
Meriones, of manslaying Ares the peer,
Eurypylos next, Euaemon's glorious son,
And ninth came Teucer, with back-bent bow in his hand,
Who stood 'neath the shield of Ajax, Telamon's son.
And Ajax would stealthily move his shield to the side
And Teucer would spy his chance and when once he had shot
And smitten a man in the throng and bereft him of life,
Would then, as a child to his mother, for shelter return
To Ajax, who hid him again with his glittering shield.

Who first of the Trojans by noble Teucer was slain?
Orsilochus first and Ormenus, brave Ophelestes,
And Daetor and Chromius and prince Lycomedes were slain,
Polyaemon's son Amopaon, and, eighth, Melanippus;
All these he laid in turn on the bounteous earth.
And the King of men, Agamemnon, rejoic'd when he saw
How the bow made havoc among the battalions of Troy,
And he went and, standing by Teucer, a word to him spake:
'Teucer, thou son of Telamon, chieftain of men,
Shoot on and so to the Argives deliverance bring
And joy to thy father who nurtur'd thee, yet but a child,
And rear'd in his house with his own, tho' a bastard thou wert;
Yea, him exalt thou to honour, afar tho' he be.
This too will I say, and of this fulfilment shall be;
If Zeus almighty and grey-eyed Athena vouchsafe
That Ilion's bastion'd keep I lay in the dust,
Thou first after me shalt a guerdon of honour receive,
Either a tripod or chariot with horses thereto,
Or haply some captive woman to enter thy bed.'
And him did the noble Teucer in answer address:

'Most noble Atrides, why dost thou urge me to shoot,
That am eager myself? For with all the strength that I have
I rest not but, ev'n from the hour that the Trojans we drove
Back towards Troy, I have watch'd to slay with my bow;
Eight long-barb'd arrows ere this have I shot at the foe
And each in a young man's flesh has gone to its mark:
Only this mad dog Hector can I not hit.'

So saying, another arrow he shot from the string
Straight against Hector, and fain that mark would have
reach'd:

Him did he miss and the blameless Gorgythion
Smote on the breast; a son of Priam was he
By the wife that from fair Aesyma Priam had wed,
Castianeira, in beauty as one of the Gods.
And as in a garden a poppy droops on its stalk
Weigh'd down by its podded fruit and the showers of spring,
So sideways bow'd he his head by the helmet o'erweigh'd.
Then Teucer another arrow shot from his string
Straight against Hector and fain that mark would have reach'd,
Yet miss'd he again, for Apollo turn'd it aside,
But Archeptolemus, Hector's bold charioteer,
As he drove into battle beside the nipple he smote,
And he fell from the car and the fleet-footed horses at once
Started and swerv'd and his spirit and strength were unstrung.
And dread grief on Hector came for his charioteer,
Yet left he him lying, tho' sore for his comrade he griev'd,
And descrying near him his brother, Kebriones,
He bade him take up the reins, and he heard and obey'd;
And himself from the splendid chariot leapt to the ground
With a terrible shout and, seizing a stone in his hands,
Made at Teucer, intending to strike him and slay.
Now he from his quiver a keen-barb'd arrow had pluck'd
And laid on the string, when Hector, ev'n as he drew,
On the shoulder just where the ridge of the collar-bone parts
The neck from the breast (and there is the deadliest spot)
Smote with the jagged stone and sever'd the string
Of the tight-drawn bow, and his hand grew numb to the wrist
And he fell to his knees, and the bow dropp'd broken to earth.
And Ajax was ware of his fallen brother and ran
And bestrode him and over him rais'd his sheltering shield,
And then came his trusty comrades and lifted him up,
Mekisteus the son of Echius and goodly Alastor,
And bore him heavily groaning back to the ships.
And again the Olympian stirr'd the Trojans to fight,

And straight towards the deep-delv'd trench the Achaeans they
drove

And Hector among the foremost exulted in strength;
And ev'n as a hound at the heels of a lion or a boar,
Ever with swift foot following, snatches at him
By the buttock or flank, still watching for him to turn,
So Hector press'd on the long-hair'd Achaeans amain,
And ever the hindmost slew as they fled towards the wall.

But when through the trench and the stout palisade they had
pass'd,

Flying, and many had fall'n at the hands of the foe,
They halted at last and stood by the well-timber'd ships
Calling each to the other and, lifting their hands
To Zeus and all the Immortals, they instantly pray'd;
And Hector his fair-maned steeds wheel'd this way and that,
Eyed like the Gorgon or Ares, slayer of men.
But white-arm'd Hera, beholding, had pity on them
And quickly in winged words Athena address'd:
'Out on it, daughter of Zeus, have we ceas'd then to care
For the Argives that perish? 'Tis now to the uttermost come,
For soon they will perish and fill up the measure of fate
Through one man's onset that rages intolerably,
This son of Priam, and evils a-many has wrought.'
And her did grey-eyed Athena in answer address:
'Yea, as for him, may he yield up his spirit and life
And fall on his native earth at the Danaans' hands!
But our Father it is that rages so furiously;
Headstrong and wicked is he, and a foiler of hope.
Those times he remembers no more when oft and again
His dear son I sav'd, by Eurystheus' labour fordone;
How often he lifted his hands and cried to the heavens
And Zeus sent me from Olympus to succour his plight.
If only my prudent mind had known it for truth
When Eurystheus sent him to Hades, the Warder of Hell,
And bade him the loathly watchdog from Erebus bring,
He had never escap'd from the Stygian water so steep;
But now does he hate me and Thetis's purpose fulfils
Who, kissing his knees and touching his beard with her hands,
Besought him to honour Achilles, sacker of towns;
Yet some day his blue-eyed Maid he will call me again.
Now make thou ready the whole-hoov'd horses for us,
And I to the palace will go of all-ruling Zeus
And gird me in arms for the battle that so I may see
If bright-plum'd Hector, Priam's son, will rejoice

To see us appearing again on the highways of war,
For surely o'er many a Trojan vultures and dogs
Shall gloat, devouring his fat as he lies by the ships.'
She spake, and the Goddess, white-arm'd Hera, obey'd
And departed to harness the fair gold-frontleted steeds,
Hera, the daughter of Cronos, the Heavenly Queen,
But Pallas Athena, the daughter of all-ruling Zeus,
Cast down at her father's threshold her bright-gleaming robe,
Fair-wov'n, that herself had fashion'd and wrought with her
hands,

And donning the tunic of Zeus that gathers the clouds
Array'd her for dolorous battle in armour divine,
And clomb to the flaming chariot and grasp'd in her hand
Her great spear, heavy and stout, wherewith she o'erthrows
The ranks of heroes whenever her anger is stirr'd;
And Hera the fleet-footed horses plied with the lash.
Self-moving groan'd on their hinges the portals of Heaven
That the Hours warded, to whom is committed the charge
Whether to roll back the cloud on Olympus or shut,
And through them they guided the horses heeding the goad.

But when Zeus from Ida beheld, he was terribly wroth
And Iris the golden-wing'd with a message he sent:
'Go, fleet Iris, recall them and suffer them not
To face me in fight, for in no happy sort should we meet.
For this will I say, and so the fulfilment shall be:
I will maim their fleet-footed horses under their yoke
And themselves will dash to the ground and their chariot break,
Nor shall they, while ten long years are circling their course,
Be heal'd of the wounds that the thunderbolt tears in their
flesh,

And Athena shall know what it is with her father to fight.
But with Hera my wife my indignation is less,
Seeing 'tis ever her wont my purpose to thwart.'
So spake he, and wind-shod Iris sped on her errand
And from Ida's mount to Olympus quickly was come
And Athena and Hera just in the gateway she met
And stay'd them and told them the saying of all-ruling Zeus:
'Whither haste ye? What madness is this that possesses your
hearts?

Cronion forbids you to succour the Danaans in fight;
For this is his threat, and the word he will surely fulfil:
He will maim your fleet-footed horses under their yoke
And yourselves will dash to the ground and your chariot break
Nor shall ye, while ten long years are circling their course,

Be heal'd of the wounds that the thunderbolt tears in your flesh,
That Athena may know what it is with her father to fight.
With Hera his wife his indignation is less,
Seeing it is ever her wont his purpose to thwart,
But with thee he is wroth, bold vixen, if verily thou
Thy huge spear against Zeus wilt dare to uplift.'

So saying, fleet-footed Iris was gone on her way,
And Hera a word to grey-eyed Athena address'd:
'Out on it, daughter of Zeus, no longer would I
For the sake of mortal men have us war against Zeus;
As for them, let one man die and another survive
As fate may befall, but let Zeus take thought with himself
And judge between Trojans and Danaans ev'n as is meet.'
So saying, she turn'd the whole-hoov'd horses again
And the Hours unyok'd from the car the fair-coated team
And tether'd them up by their mangers, ambrosial gold,
And tilted the cars on the shining walls at the gate;
And anon on their golden thrones the Goddesses twain
Sate 'mid the throng of the Gods, sore grieving at heart.
Zeus also from Ida his fair-wheel'd chariot drove
Back to Olympus and enter'd the session of Gods,
And the glorious Shaker of earth the horses unyok'd
And the chariot yet on its stand and spread o'er it a cloth
And far-seeing Zeus himself on his high seat of gold
Sate, and mighty Olympus trembled and rock'd,
Only Athena and Hera sate them apart
And spake no word to the Father nor questions ask'd,
But he in his heart was ware and address'd them and said:
'Why, O Athena and Hera, why so distress'd?

Ye are scarcely o'erwearied with slaying the warriors of Troy
And wreaking on them in battle your terrible wrath.
Ye know that the power of my hands so invincible is
That not all the Gods in Olympus could turn me aside,
And you, ye were seiz'd with trembling in every limb
Ere ever ye witness'd the terror of ruinous war.
For this will I say, and e'en so the fulfilment had been:
If my thunder had struck you, never had ye in your car
Come back to Olympus, whereon is the seat of the Gods.'

He spake, and Athena and Hera murmur'd thereat
As they sat by each other and ill for the Trojans devis'd;
Now Athena brooded in silence and said not a word
For all her anger, and fierce indeed was her wrath,
But Hera's breast contain'd not her rage, and she spake:
'Dread son of Cronos, what word is this thou hast said?

Well do we know, ev'n we, that thy power is not weak,
But still for the Danaan spearmen pity we feel
That now shall perish and fill up the measure of fate.
Yet will we refrain from the battle, if that is thy will,
And counsel bring to the Argives to succour their need
Lest all of them perish because of thy terrible wrath.'
And her did the Cloud-compeller in answer address:
'At dawn thou shalt see most mighty Cronion himself,
If so thou wilt have it, O Hera, Heavenly Queen,
Wreak havoc the more 'mong the spear-arm'd host of Achaea,
For never shall glorious Hector from battle refrain
Till Peleus' swift-footed son have aris'n by the ships
On the day when in grievous stress by the sterns of their ships
The Danaan host for Patroclus fallen shall fight.
Such is the doom of the Gods, and I reckon not of thee
And thy anger, not ev'n if thou go to the nethermost bound
Of earth and the sea, where Cronos and Iapetus sit
And enjoy not the beams of the sun and the breezes of heav'n
But on every side is the deep Tartarean night.
Tho' thou run to the depths of the pit, I reckon not of thee
Nor of thy vexation, shameless jade that thou art.'

So spake he, and white-arm'd Hera said not a word.
And the gleaming light of the sun in Ocean was dipp'd
And drew o'er the grain-giving earth the blackness of night,
Night unwelcome to Trojans, defeating their hope,
But to all in the Danaan camp thrice pray'd-for and sweet.
Now Hector held an assembly, leading the host
To the banks of the eddying river, away from the ships:
And they gather'd on open ground that was clear of the dead
And, ranging the chariots in order, dismounted to hear
The word that Hector proclaim'd. He held in his hand
His spear, elev'n cubits long, whereon at the head
Was the brazen point and a ring of gold round it ran;
And, leaning thereon, he harangued the Trojans and spake:
'Hear me, ye Trojans and Dardans and allies of ours:
I had thought to destroy the ships and the Danaans slay
And so to depart to windy Ilion again;
But darkness has come too soon, and 'tis chiefly the night
That has sav'd both the host and their ships on the strand of
the sea.

So now let us heed night's bidding, loath tho' we be,
And our supper prepare; unyoke ye your fair-maned horses
And tether them well and serve them their fodder of grain,
And go to the city and kine and well-fatted sheep

Bring ye with speed and provide you with honey-sweet wine,
And come from your houses, and gather ye plenteous wood,
That all night long till the first springing of dawn
We may burn many fires and the blaze may ascend to the
heaven

And haply the long-hair'd Achaeans even by night
Set them to flee on their ships o'er the broad-bosom'd main.
Let them not think to embark unchalleng'd, at ease,
But see ye that every one of them take with him home
A wound to nurse, being stricken with arrow or spear,
When he leaps on his ship, that another hereafter may dread
To wage on the horse-taming Trojans dolorous war.
And bid ye the heralds throughout the city proclaim
That our stripling lads and the elders hoary with age
Muster and lie on the battlements builded of Gods
And the wives of the Trojans likewise, each in her hall,
Keep burning a great fire and see that watches be set
Lest an ambush enter the city while we are away.
Thus be it, great-hearted Trojans, ev'n as I bid,
The word that is sound let it stand as spoken, to-day,
But to-morrow at dawn with a far other voice shall I speak.
With good hope to Zeus and all the Immortals I pray
To chase from our soil these dogs driv'n on by the fates,
E'en these that the fates drive on in their sea-going ships.
Howbeit, for the night let us watch at our bivouac well
And to-morrow at dawning of day array us in arms
And awake by the hollow ships the fury of war.
Then shall I know if the son of Tydeus can chase
Me from the ships to the wall, or him I shall slay
With the spear, and make of his blood-stain'd armour a spoil.
To-morrow will prove him, whether his valour can stand
My onset or not, but among the foremost, methinks,
He will lie on the field with many a comrade around
To-morrow at rising of sun. Ah! Would that I could
Be immortal and ageless for all the days of my life
And be honour'd ev'n as Athena and Phoebus Apollo
So surely as this day brings to the Danaans woe.'

So Hector harangued and the Trojans roar'd their applause;
Then loos'd they their sweating horses from under the yoke
And tether'd beside their chariots, each by his own,
And went to the city and kine and well-fatted sheep
Brought they with speed and provision of honey-sweet wine
And corn for their horses and gather'd plenteous wood,
And then to the Gods they sacrificed hecatombs meet

And the savour was borne by the winds to the heaven above
Exceeding sweet, but the Gods partook not of it,
Remembering that holy Ilion was hateful to them
And Priam and Priam's folk of the good ashen spear.
But they with pride in their hearts on the highways of war
Nightlong sat, and their fires in multitude burn'd
And ev'n as the stars round the pale bright moon in the heav'n
Conspicuous gleam and twinkle when windless the air,
And the peaks and the glens and the sharp-ridg'd promontories
Shine clear and from heav'n breaks open the infinite air,
So many between the ships and Scamander appear'd
The fires that the Trojans in front of Ilion lit:
A thousand watchfires burn'd on the plain, and by each
Sat fifty men in the gleam of the blazing fire,
And the horses, champing the white grain of barley and spelt,
Stood by their chariots awaiting the bright-thron'd dawn.

*Agamemnon sends messengers with gifts for Achilles,
hoping to appease him; his request is refused.*

So kept the Trojans their watch, but the Argives were held
By God-sent Panic, handmaid of palsyng fear,
And in all the princes grief unendurable raged;
As winds of the North and the East come blowing from Thrace
And stir with their sudden onset the fish-teeming deep
And straightway the darkening billow raises its crest
And casts up a tangle of weed on every beach,
E'en so was the spirit within them troubled and dark,
And the son of Atreus with grief was stricken at heart
And commanded the clear-voiced heralds this way and that
To call an assembly, summoning each one by name
And not by cry, and he gather'd the princes himself.
So came they and grieving sat, and Atrides rose,
Shedding tears as a spring down the face of a rock
Glistening black, precipitous, trickles and drips;
And heavily groaning among the Danaans spake:
'Friends, captains, and counsellors all that in Argos have power,
Cronion has bound me in grievous blindness of soul,
Hard-hearted, who promis'd erewhile with the nod of his head
That home I should go but only when Troy I had sack'd,
Yet now has he cruelly deceiv'd me and bids me return
To Argos disgraced with thousands slain of my folk.
So is it pleasing to-day to all-ruling Zeus,
Who the head of many a town has abased in the dust
And still shall abase, for his is the power over all.
Come then, hear ye my counsel, and hearing obey:
Let us flee in our ships to our own dear country again,
For wide-way'd Ilion now we never shall take.'

So spake he, and all were silent, holding their peace;
Long were the sons of Achaea speechless for grief,
But stalwart Diomed spake among them at last:
'Atrides, with thee in thy folly first I will deal,
As is right, O King, in debate, and be thou not wroth.
Once thou didst speak to my shame and my courage reproach,
Calling me laggard and craven and no man of arms,
But the Danaans young and old are ware of the truth.

Truly the son of Cronos endow'd thee by halves;
He gave thee the sceptre, and honour therewith above all,
But valour he gave not, wherein is the strength of a man.
Thinkst thou indeed, O King, that the sons of Achaea
Are cowards and weaklings, no men of arms as thou sayst?
If thy own heart verily bid thee return o'er the deep,
Go: for the way lies open, thy ships by the sea
Stand ready, the many that came from Mycene with thee;
But all the rest of the long-hair'd Achaeans will bide
Till Troy be laid in the dust. Nay, even if these
Flee on their ships to their own dear country again,
Yet I and Sthenelus still will continue the fight
Till the goal of Ilion we reach with God as our help.'

So spake he and all the Achaeans shouted assent,
Applauding the saying of Diomed, tamer of horses;
And the Knightly Nestor arose and spake in their midst:
'Son of Tydeus, in fight thou art one of the best,
And in council the best among all thy equals in age,
Nor will any of all the Achaeans thy saying dispute
Or speak of it lightly; and yet thou hast not made an end.
I grant thou art young and mightest be even my son,
My youngest born; yet truly thou counsellest well
The assembly, because thou hast spoken according to right.
Lo now, I that can claim to be older than thou
Will expound and speak forth my mind, nor shall any of
you

Belittle my saying, not even Atrides himself;
A tribeless and lawless and houseless spirit is he
That delights in civil contention and heart-breaking strife.
Rest we awhile, and, obeying the summons of night,
Make ready our meal, and let each of the sentinels go
To his place by the deep-delv'd trench that is under the wall.
So charge I the youth; and thereafter, Atrides, do thou
Lead in the way, for thou art most royal and King.
And spread for the elders a feast, as falls to thy rank;
Thy huts are flowing with wine that our seagoing ships
Bring for thee daily from Thrace o'er the broad-bosom'd sea
And so thou hast fare for the feast, being King over all,
And when many are gather'd, listen to him that shall speak
Most excellent counsel, for verily sore is our need
Of prudent wits, for our foemen band by the ships
Are burning their watchfires; what man can rejoice at the
sight?

This night will either destroy us or save us alive.'

He spake, and they heard him gladly and, hearing, obey'd;
And forth the sentinels went in their harness of bronze
Under Nestor's son Thrasymedes, shepherd of men,
And Ascalaphus and Ialmenus, scions of Ares,
Aphareus, Meriones, and Deipyrus,
And Creion's son Lycomedes, noble and brave.
These seven were captains and each one led in his train
A hundred youths with their long spears in their hands,
And between the trench and the wall their stations they took
And kindled a fire, and each made ready his meal.
And Atrides gather'd the elders and brought to his hut
And good cheer set before them, a bounteous feast,
And they stretch'd forth their hands to the viands laid on the
board;

But when they had sated desire both of meat and of drink,
Then first did the old man begin his counsel to weave,
Nestor, whose excellent rede they had proven of old.
He now with kindly intent harangued them and spake:
'Most glorious Atrides, King and ruler of men,
My first word, and last, are to thee, because thou art lord
Of many a people and Zeus has set in thy hands
The sceptre and law, to take wise counsel for them.
Thee therefore in chief it behoves both to speak and to hear
And another's counsel fulfil when his heart bids him speak
To the general good; his the word but the deed will be thine.
I now will declare my counsel as seems to me best
For no more excellent thought can any man hold
Than this that I spake from aforetime even till now
From the day thou didst anger Achilles, O heav'n-nurtured
King,

And the maid Brisëis, his prize, didst take from his hut,
We unconsenting. 'Twas I dissuaded thee then
Before the assembly, but thou in the pride of thy heart
Dishonoured a man, ay a prince, that is held by the Gods
In honour; thou tookest his guerdon to keep for thyself.
Late tho' it be, consider we how we may best
With gifts and speeches of friendship his anger appease.'

And him did King Agamemnon in answer address:
'Old Sire, not falsely hast thou my folly arraign'd;
I was blinded, I say it myself. Worth many a host
Is the man that Zeus Cronion loves in his heart
As now he has honour'd Achilles and Argos destroys.
But since blinded I was by my sorry passion and pride,
I will make him amends and a priceless recompense give

And now in your hearing the glorious gifts I will name;
 Seven tripods that fire has not touched, ten talents of gold,
 Of gleaming cauldrons a score, and race-horses twelve,
 Well-bred, that prizes have won by their fleetness of foot;
 No lackland were he of a truth whose wealth were as great,
 Nor undower'd of precious gold if his wealth were as great
 As the prizes my whole-hoov'd horses have won in the course.
 Seven women too will I give him, in handiwork skill'd,
 Lesbians, chos'n from the spoil when Achilles himself
 Took Lesbos, excelling in beauty all women on earth,
 These will I give him and with them the maid that I took,
 Briseïs herself, and a mighty oath will I swear
 That never I lay with the damsel or entered her bed
 And had converse of love as the way is of women and men.
 All this shall be his this day, and hereafter, if God
 Vouchsafe us that Priam's great-walled city we sack,
 Entering in when the host is dividing the spoil
 With gold and with bronze let him lade his ships to the full
 And twenty Trojan women choose for himself
 After Helen of Argos the goodliest and fairest in Troy.
 And if to Achæan Argos we ever return
 My son shall he be, in rank as Orestes himself,
 The stripling prince that I nurture in plenty and wealth.
 Three daughters I have in my well-built palace at home,
 Chrysthemis dear, Laodice, Iphianassa;
 Of these let him wed which he will and take with him home
 Nor the bride-price pay, for I will endow her with gifts
 Such as no man ever before with his daughter has given.
 And of well-peopled cities seven will I give him to boot,
 Grassy Hira and Enopa and Cardamyle,
 Holy Pheræ, Antheia in meadowland deep,
 Fair Aepeia and Pegasus, country of vine,
 All near the sea on Pylos' uttermost bounds;
 There dwell men wealthy in cattle and wealthy in flocks,
 Men that shall serve him with worship and gifts, as a God,
 And beneath his sceptre abundant revenues pay.
 All this will I give him if once he cease from his wrath;
 Let him yield, then—Hades, I trow, is unyielding and hard
 And therefore to mortal men most hateful of Gods—
 Let him yield and be ruled, for I am more royal than he
 By the Kingship I hold and avow me his elder in years.'
 And to him did the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, reply:
 'Most glorious Atreides, King and ruler of men,
 Not to be lightly esteem'd are the gifts thou hast nam'd.

But come, let us choose now our spokesmen and speed them forthwith

To the hut of godlike Achilles Pelëides;
Hear then my choice, and let each of them show his consent.
First Phoenix belov'd of the Gods to lead on the way,
Next Ajax and noble Odysseus, spokesmen in chief,
And for heralds let Odius and goodly Eurybatus go.
And now bring water and holy silence proclaim
And pray we to Cronion Zeus to have mercy on us.'

So spake Nestor a word well-pleasing to all,
And the heralds at once pour'd water over their hands
And young men, brimming the bowls with bright-hearted wine,
An offering pour'd for the Gods in each of the cups.
And when they had made libation and sated their thirst
Forth from the hut of King Agamemnon they went.
Oft did Gerenian Nestor give them his charge,
Glancing at each one in turn and Odysseus in chief,
How best with persuasion to move great Pelëides.
So went these two by the strand of the loud-breaking sea
With many a prayer to Poseidon, Shaker of Earth,
For power to prevail o'er the heart of Aeacides.
And they came to the ships and the huts of the Myrmidon men
And found Achilles cheering his soul with his lyre
Fair, cunningly wrought, that a silver bridge on it had
That he took from the spoil when Ætion's city he sack'd;
He sang of the glories of heroes, cheering his heart,
And Patroclus over against him listened and sat
Waiting till Aeacides from his singing should cease.
And the two came forward, Odysseus leading the way,
And before him stood, and Achilles leapt in amaze
With the lyre in his hand and advanced from the chair where
he sat

And Patroclus likewise, beholding the envoys, arose:
And swift-foot Achilles address'd them a greeting and spake:
'Welcome, for friends ye are still, tho' strong be your need,
Yet in spite of my anger the dearest in Argos to me.'
So spake godlike Achilles, and brought them within
And made them on settles and purple carpets to sit
And straightway spake to Patroclus that stood at his side:
'Son of Menoetius, mingle a livelier drink
In a larger bowl, and prepare for each man a cup,
For the dearest of men are these that are under my roof.'
He spake and at once Patroclus his comrade obey'd,
But Achilles a fleshing-block cast in the light of the fire

And on it he laid the backs of a sheep and a goat
And the chine of a boar laid also dripping with fat.
These Automedon held and Achilles with speed
Cut them and carefully sliced and pierced them on spits;
Then, when the fire had burn'd and the flame died down,
Evenly raking the embers he set on the spits
Raising them up on the spit-racks, and sprinkled with salt,
And when he had roasted and laid on platters the meats,
Patroclus his comrade set on the table the bread
In baskets trim, while Achilles portion'd the meats,
Seating himself where goodly Odysseus he faced
By the opposite wall. And then Patroclus he bade
An offering burn for the Gods, and he straightway obey'd,
And they stretch'd their hands to the viands laid on the board.

But when they had sated desire both of meat and of drink
Ajax nodded to Phoenix but, marking the sign,
Goodly Odysseus pledg'd Pelides and spake:
'Hail, Achilles, we lack not the generous feast
Either before in the hut of Atrides the King
Or now in thy own; for meats in abundance there are
For our feasting. Yet think we not now of savoury meats,
For a grievous trouble is ours, O foster'd of Zeus,
That fills us with fear, and we know not whether the ships
Still can be saved if thou show not thyself in thy might;
For hard by the ships and the wall their bivouac keep
The high-hearted Trojans and with them their famous allies
And have kindled many a watchfire and deem that no more
Is there any to hold them back from destroying the ships.
And Cronion Zeus still shows them signs on the right
Thundering and lightning, and Hector, trusting in him,
Greatly exults and rages nor recks any more
Of men or of Gods, for madness possesses his soul
And he prays to the heavenly dawn with speed to appear;
For his word he has pass'd to strike off the ensigns' tops
From the ships and to burn their hulls with ravening fire
And destroy the Achaeans beside them, bewilder'd with smoke.
Therefore I terribly fear lest his boasts be fulfill'd
By the heavenly Gods and for us it is fated indeed
Far from horse-rearing Argos in Troyland to die.
Up then, if still thou wilt save us, late tho' it be,
Weary of fight, by the tumult of battle fordone.
Thine will the grief be hereafter, since cure there is none
For ill once done; bethink thee therefore this hour
How thou shalt ward from the Danaans the day of their doom.

Dear youth! remember, thy father gave thee command
 That day when he sent thee forth with Atrides to serve—
 "My son, Athena and Hera both courage and strength
 Can give, but do thou the spirit of pride
 Refrain in thy heart, for a gentle temper is best;
 Withhold thee from mischievous strife, that the Danaan host,
 Old men and young, may hold thee in honour the more."
 So charg'd he, but thou hast forgotten; relent even now,
 And forget thy heart-searing wrath. Atrides the King
 Offers thee worthy gifts if thou cease from thy wrath;
 Come now, listen to me while the tale I recite
 Of the gifts that King Agamemnon has promised to thee:
 Seven tripods that fire has not touch'd, ten talents of gold,
 Of gleaming cauldrons a score, and race-horses twelve,
 Well-bred, that prizes have won by their fleetness of foot;
 No lackland were he of a truth whose wealth were as great
 Nor undower'd of precious gold, if his wealth were as great
 As the prizes those whole-hoov'd horses have won on the course.
 Seven women too will he give thee, in handiwork skill'd,
 Lesbians, chos'n from the spoil when thou tookest thyself
 Lesbos, excelling in beauty all women on earth;
 These will he give thee and with them the maid that he took,
 Brisëis herself, and a mighty oath will he swear
 That never he lay with the damsel nor enter'd her bed
 Nor had converse of love as the way is of women and men.
 All this shall be thine this day, and hereafter, if God
 Vouchsafe us that Priam's great-walled city we sack,
 Thou, entering in when the host is dividing the spoil
 With gold and with bronze shalt lade thy ship to the full
 And twenty Trojan women shalt choose for thyself,
 After Helen of Argos the goodliest and fairest of Troy.
 And if to Achæan Argos we ever return
 His son shalt thou be, in rank as Orestes himself.
 The stripling prince that he nurtures in plenty and wealth.
 Three daughters he has in his well-built palace at home,
 Chrysothemis dear, Laodice, Iphianassa;
 Of these shalt thou wed which thou wilt and take with thee
 home,
 Nor the bride-price pay, for he will endow her with gifts
 Such as no man ever before with his daughter has giv'n.
 And of well-peopled cities seven will he give thee to boot,
 Grassy Hira and Enopa and Cardamyle,
 Holy Phærae, Antheia in meadowland deep,
 Fair Aepeia and Pedasus, country of vine,

All near the sea on Pylos' uttermost bounds;
There dwell men wealthy in cattle and wealthy in flocks,
Men that shall serve thee with worship and gifts, as a God,
And beneath thy sceptre abundant revenues pay.
All this will he do if only thou cease from thy wrath.
But if all the more Atrides is hateful to thee,
Himself and his gifts, yet the other Achaeans do thou
Pity that faint by the ships, who will honour thee then
Ev'n as a God for the glory and fame thou shalt win,
For now thou mayst slay great Hector when near thee he comes
In his ruinous madness, seeing that no man he deems
His equal of all the Achaeans that sail'd in the ships.'

And him did swiftfoot Achilles in answer address:
'Heav'n-born son of Laertes, wary Odysseus,
Need is there now that my meaning I plainly declare,
The thought that I nurse in my heart and will surely fulfil,
That ye sit not before me cozening this way and that,
For he as the gates of Hades is hateful to me
Who speaks not the thing with his tongue that he hides in his
heart.

Hear me then, this is my word, as it seems to me best:
Not me shall Atrides, King Agamemnon, persuade
Nor the rest of the Danaans, seeing I win not a thank
For battling with fierce men of arms continually;
Fighters and stay-at-home men have an equal reward
And for brave and coward alike one honour there is
Since the only guerdon for doer and laggard is death.
So neither have I any profit of all I endure'd,
All that I suffer'd, staking in battle my life;
See how the hen each morsel brings to her young,
Her callow nestlings, tho' hard it may go with herself,
E'en so how many a sleepless night have I watch'd
How many a bloody day have I toil'd, on the field
Where men for their women's sake with Atrides have fought!
Twelve cities of sea-dwelling men from ship-board I sack'd
And elev'n on land, in rich-soil'd Troyland, I say;
Many a goodly treasure from these did I win
And brought them to King Agamemnon and gave them to him,
And he, that had tarried behind 'mong the sea-going ships,
Would portion some few but the more part keep for himself.
Moreover the princes that meeds of honour receiv'd
Still hold them untouch'd, and from me alone he has snatch'd
The leman I loved so dearly. May he have joy
As he sleeps by her side. What need for the Argives to fight

With the Trojans? Or why did Atrides gather the host
To lead it to Troy? Is not fair-hair'd Helen the cause?
Do then the sons of Atreus alone among men
Love well their wives? Nay, every good man and true
Loves and cares for his own, as I in my heart
Lov'd mine, tho' a captive she was and won with the spear.
But now that my prize he has taken, let him not think
To persuade me. I know him of old, and he cannot atone.
Nay, Odysseus, with thee and the princes let him
Take counsel to ward from the ships the ravening fire,
For truly without my help full much he has wrought;
He has built him a wall and a great trench round it has dug,
Broad and deep, and a strong palisade in it set,
Yet the strength of manslaying Hector he cannot restrain.
So long as Achilles fought in the Danaan host,
Not far from his walls would Hector his battle array
But scarce to the Scaean gates and the oak-tree would come—
Once he awaited me there and hardly escap'd.
So, seeing I have no mind with Hector to fight,
I will sacrifice victims to-morrow to Zeus and the Gods
And lade well my ships, having launch'd them into the deep;
Then shalt thou see me at dawn, if thou carest to see,
Over the fish-teeming Hellespont sailing away
And the Myrmidon men right eagerly pulling the oar,
And if only the Earthshaker grant that my voyage be fair
On the third day in deep-soil'd Phthia I land.
There have I great estate, that I left when I came,
And bronze and gold; yet more shall I carry from here
With many a fair-girdled woman and grey iron ore,
All that I gain'd by the lot, for my guerdon alone
Has he that gave it in arrogance taken away,
Lord Agamemnon. To him my saying declare
As I charge thee, plainly, that all the Achaeans may feel
Indignation if others he hopes to beguile,
He, in shamelessness cloth'd; for he never would dare,
Tho' he have the front of a dog, to look in my face.
No counsel with him will I take, no enterprise share
With one that so wickedly cheated me; never again
Shall he cozen me—once is enough; away with him then
And his wheedling speeches, for Zeus has taken his wits.
And his gifts are hateful; I count them at less than a straw.
E'en though he should offer me tenfold and twentyfold more
Than all he possesses and all that from elsewhere might come,
Archomenus' revenues, all that the treasuries hold

In Thebes of Egypt, stor'd with their measureless wealth,
Thebes of the hundred gates, wherefrom sally forth
Two hundred charioteers at every gate.
Tho' he offer'd me numberless gifts as the sands of the sea
Not even so should the Lord Agamemnon persuade
My soul, till he pay me in full for the bitter despite.
And a daughter of King Agamemnon I will not wed;
Not though she rivall'd the golden Goddess of love
In beauty, and grey-eyed Athena in handiwork match'd
Would I wed her e'en so; let him choose of the sons of Achaea
Some other befitting his rank, more royal than I.
For if Heaven preserve me and home to Phthia I come
Then vainly Peleus himself will seek me a wife,
For many Achaeian maidens in Hellas there are
Daughters of princes that war for the cities of men
And of these whomsoever I will my lady shall be.
Often in Phthia my proud spirit was mov'd
To take me a wedded wife, a helpmeet to be
And enjoy the many possessions of Peleus with me.
For better than life I count not even the wealth
That they say that Ilion's well-built city possess'd
In the days of the peace ere the sons of Achaea arriv'd,
No, nor the treasures of gold that the threshold of stone
In Apollo's temple on rocky Pytho defends.
Cattle and goodly flocks for the harrowing there are,
But to bring back the life of a man no harrowing avails
Nor chaffer, when once it has pass'd the fence of his teeth;
For this says my mother, Thetis the silvery-footed,
That twin fates are leading me on to the fate which is death;
If here I remain and besiege the city of Troy,
I lose my return but my name is imperishable;
But if home to Phthia I go, my dear native land,
Then lose I my glorious name but my life shall endure
Long years, and the end that is death shall come to me late.
Moreover, I counsel you all the same as myself
To sail away home, for no longer the goal ye may reach
Of Ilion's keep, for over her far-seeing Zeus
Has stretch'd out his arm and her people with courage has
steel'd.

Go then your way to the princes and chiefs of Achaea
And tell them my answer (the office of elders is that)
That they may a better counsel devise in their hearts
That may save them their ships and the port of Achaea as well
'Mong the hollow ships, since this other they now have devis'd

Nothing avails, for the wrath that has enter'd my heart.
But let Phoenix remain where he is and lay him to rest
And to-morrow sail to his own dear country with me,
That is, if he will, for I think to take him by force.'

So spake he, and all were silent, holding their peace
In amaze, for Achilles denied them vehemently,
But the old Knight Phoenix spake at the last in their midst
As he burst into tears, for he trembled sore for the ships:
'If indeed, most glorious Achilles, thou thinkest of home
And no more art minded to save the well-timber'd ships
From destroying fire, for the wrath that has enter'd thy heart,
How then am I to be left thereafter alone?
To thee did the old man Peleus send me the day
That thou wentest from Phthia with King Agamemnon to
serve,

A stripling unvers'd as yet in the battles of men
Or the ways of debate wherein men pre-eminent wax;
And therefore he sent me to school thee in arts such as these,
To make thee a speaker of words and a doer of deeds.
And so, dear son, I would not be parted from thee,
Not even if God himself should take upon him
To strip off my years and make me a young man again
As when first from Hellas I came, where women are fair,
Fleeing from strife with my father Amyntor at home
Because of the fair-hair'd leman he brought to our house
And cherish'd o'er measure, dishonouring my mother, his wife,
Who besought me to go in first to the concubine's bed
And make the old man my father hateful to her.
And I hearken'd and did the deed, but my father was ware
And curs'd me and call'd on the dreadful Furies to see
That never a dear son, sprung of my loins, should be born
To sit on his knee; and the Gods his curses fulfill'd,
E'en Chthonian Zeus and the dread Queen, Persephone.
Then took I counsel against him and fain would have kill'd
But some God with his warning stay'd me and put in my mind
The voice of the people, the many reproaches of men,
Lest my name among the Achaeans should parricide be,
And then might my troubled spirit be nowise refrain'd
In the house of my anger'd father to dwell any more;
Oft would my comrades and kinsmen reason with me
Or instantly pray me to tarry with them in his halls
And many a goodly sheep and crook-horn'd ox
They slaughter'd, and many a porker, dripping with fat,
They spitted to singe o'er Hephaestus' fiery flame,

And wine from the old man's jars unstinted we drank.
Nine nights long round my prison'd body they slept
Waking by turns, and never the watchfires were quench'd
One in the courtyard under the long colonnade,
While one by the chamber doors in the portico burn'd,
But at last when the tenth dark night was come upon us
Then burst I within my chamber the well-fitting doors
And, sallying forth, the fence of the courtyard o'erleapt
Lightly, eluding the watch and the maids of the house,
And far thereafter through wide-lawn'd Hellas I fled
Till I came to deep-soil'd Phthia, mother of flocks,
To the house of Peleus the King, and he welcomed me there
And lov'd me and cherish'd, ev'n as a father his son,
His only begotten, the heir of his wealth and his house,
And he made me a rich man and gave me a lordship and folk,
And in uttermost Phthia I dwelt and the Dolopes ruled.
And so for my love's sake I made thee such as thou art,
A peer of the Gods; for with no-one else wouldst thou go
Into the feast, nor dine each day in your hall
Save only when I had taken thee on to my knees
To give thee a savoury bite or a drink of my wine,
And many a time hast thou dabbled the shirt on my breast,
In thy childish weakness, sputtering the wine from thy lips.
Thus have I labour'd much and suffer'd for thee
Mindful of this, that the Gods vouchsaf'd not to me
A son of my body but thee, O godlike Achilles!
Have I taken for son to save me from death and disgrace.
Tame then thy spirit of pride; it becomes not a man
To be ruthless for ever. The Gods themselves will relent
And theirs is a power and an honour higher than ours
And them can a mortal by incense and reverent vows,
Libation and offering of meats, incline to his prayer
Whenso he transgresses and sins in the sight of the Gods.
For Prayers, moreover, are daughters of all-ruling Zeus,
Halting and wrinkled and seeing askance with their eyes,
And their task it is in the steps of Ate to go.
Now Ate is strong, fleet-footed, outrunning them all,
And the Gods before them over the earth among men
Making them stumble, and Prayers come behind her to heal.
And whoso these daughters of Zeus Cronion regards
Him they mightily bless and his orisons hear,
But whenso a man denies them and drives them away,
Then go they at once to Zeus Cronion and pray
That Ate may mark and atonement take for his sin;

Thou too, O Achilles, yield to the daughters of Zeus
The reverence that softens the heart of a right-thinking man.
If Atrides brought thee not gifts nor promis'd thee more
But nurs'd unceasing a furious rage in his heart
Then I would not bid thee cast thy anger away
And save the Achaeans from doom, tho' sore be their need,
But now he has offer'd thee many and promis'd thee more
And has sent to beseech thee chieftains the bravest and best
Chos'n from the host of Achaea, the men that to thee
Are dearest of all; their message dishonour thou not
Nor their journey, albeit before thy anger was just;
E'en so we have heard in the stories of heroes of old
How, when furious anger came upon one,
He also by gifts could be won or persuaded by speech.

A tale that is not of yesterday comes to my mind
And to you that are friends I will tell it, ev'n as befell:
The Curetes once and the stout Aetolians fought
Around the city of Calydon, slaying each other,
The Aetolians defending Calydon's lovely domain,
The Curetes eager to raze the city to earth.
For gold-thron'd Artemis sent on the city a scourge,
Angry that Oeneus gave not the first-fruits to her
From his orchard plot, for the Gods had their hecatomb feast
And only to Zeus's daughter offer'd he not,
Unwitting or knowing, and greatly therein did he sin.
And the Archer-Goddess, Cronion's daughter, was wroth
And a fierce wild boar, white-tusk'd, she sent upon him
That ravaged the orchards of Oeneus after his wont;
Many a tall apple-tree he fell'd to the ground
E'en from the root-stock, blossoming branches and all.
Now him Meleager, the son of Oeneus, o'erthrew,
Gathering from many a city huntsmen and hounds,
Yet none too many that deadly monster to slay
For many a one to the funeral pyre did he bring.
And the Goddesses tumult and uproar over him rais'd,
As touching his grisly head and his shag-hair'd hide,
Between Curetes and stout Aetolian men.
Now, so long as prince Meleager fought with his folk,
Ill far'd the Curetes in battle and none of them dar'd
Come out of their camp to withstand him, tho' many they were,
But when anger enter'd his soul, the furious rage
That even the hearts of the wise makes swell in their breasts,
Then, anger'd with queen Althaea, his mother, he went
To bide with his wife Cleopatra, the bride of his youth

Daughter of Iras and fair Marpessa his wife
(Idas, the strongest of men that there were upon earth,
He that took up his bow 'gainst the far-shooting God,
Phoebus Apollo, because of Marpessa the fair,
And her, Cleopatra, her parents Alcyone nam'd
Thereafter, within their halls, recalling the fate
Of the plaintive halcyon—bird that her mother endur'd
When the Far-shooter, Phoebus Apollo, snatch'd her away).
By her side lay he, brooding his heart-searing wrath,
Enrag'd by his mother's curses, for she to the Gods,
Griev'd for her brother's slaying, instantly pray'd
And often beat with her hands on the bounteous earth
And on Hades call'd and the dread Queen Persephone,
As she sank to her knees and bedew'd her bosom with tears,
To bring him to death; and the Fury that walks in the dark
Who knows not ruth in her heart, from Erebus heard.
Then quickly arose at his gates the noise and the din
Of the enemy battering towers, and the elders with speed
Sent to him priests of the Gods to beseech him to come
And save them from death, and promis'd a glorious gift;
Where Calydon's fruitful plain lay richest and best
There bade they him choose for himself a lovely demesne
Of fifty ploughgates, half of it land for the vine
And half clear ground for the plough, to be cut from the plain.
And the old Knight, Oeneus, besought him vehemently
As beside the sill of his high-roof'd chamber he stood
Shaking the leaves of the door and imploring his son;
And his sisters and lady mother besought him with prayers
But the more he refus'd; and his comrades besought him with
prayers,
Of all in the city the nearest and dearest to him,
But e'en so his obdurate heart persuaded they not,
Till his chamber was half batter'd down and the foe on the
tower
Had climb'd and were burning that mighty city with fire.
Then did his fair-girdled wife Meleager beseech
With lamentation and told him of every woe
That comes upon men whose city is taken in war,
Warriors slain, the city wasted with fire,
Children and deep-girdled women carried away;
And his heart smote him the grievous recital to hear
And he went from his chamber to put on his glorious arms
And sav'd from the evil day the Aetolian folk
Obeying his heart, tho' the gifts they paid him not now

So many and fair; yet he sav'd his people from doom.
Change then thy mood, and be thou not tempted as now
To wait for the evil day; less well would it be
To save when the ships are burning. Come for the gifts,
For there the Achaeans will honour thee, e'en as a God.
But if now thou take not the gifts ere thou enter the fight
The less thy honour will be, tho' thou save us at last.'
And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Father Phoenix, thou old man foster'd of Zeus,
I need not such honour; the judgment of Zeus is enough
That still shall uphold me in honour as long as the breath
Is strong in my breast and my limbs with life are astir.
And this moreover I say, do thou lay it to heart:
Vex not my soul with lamentation and tears
To pleasure the hero Atrides; it nowise beseems
To cherish Atrides and make thyself hateful to me.
Stand ever with me in all thy hates and thy loves,
And the half of my kingdom, the half of my honour, is thine.
These shall deliver my message; do thou tarry here
And sleep on a downy bed till the daylight shall come
And we either go to our home or abide where we are.'

He spake and to noble Patroclus nodded his brow
To spread for Phoenix a couch that the others with speed
Might depart for the huts, and among them straightway arose
Ajax Telamon's son and Odysseus address'd:
'Heav'n-born son of Laertes, wary Odysseus,
Let us go, for I see no end or fulfilment at all
Of our errand to noble Achilles; behoves us at once
Tho' the message be nowise good, to report to the host
That now sits waiting. Achilles has harden'd his heart
And wrought his spirit of pride to a furious rage.
Ruthless man! that regards not the love of his friends
Wherein among all the Achaeans we honour'd him most.
He spurns our amends; yet a man will recompense take
From his brother's slayer, ay, ev'n for a son that is dead,
And the manslayer stays in the land when the price he has paid
And the kinsman's heart and his proud soul are appeas'd
When the price he has taken. But thou art implacable still
And the Gods have harden'd thy heart for the sake of a girl,
Just one; yet now we have offer'd thee sev'n of the best
And many a gift besides. Deal kindly with us
And honour thy hearth; we are suppliants under thy roof
Sent by the Danaan host, and fain would we be
Of all the Achaeans the nearest and dearest to thee.'

And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'O heaven-born son of Telamon, chieftain of men,
The most of thy saying I like well and all but approve,
Yet my heart swells with rage whenever I think of the wrong
That Atrides did me, the insults he heap'd upon me
As though some alien I were without honour or rights.
Do ye then depart to the host and my message declare;
I will not bethink me of battle and blood-spilling war
Ere godlike Hector, the son of Priam, shall come
To the huts and the well-bench'd ships of the Myrmidon men
Slaying the Argives and smirching our timbers with fire;
But about my huts and my black-hull'd vessel I deem
That Hector, tho' eager he be, shall from battle refrain.'
He spake, and they made libation with two-handled cups
And return'd by the strand, Odysseus leading the way,
And Meneotius' son to his comrades and handmaidens call'd
And bade spread a downy couch for Phoenix with speed.
And at once they obey'd and spread it, ev'n as he bade,
A bed of fleeces and blankets and fine linen flock;
And the old man laid him to rest and awaited the dawn.
But Achilles slept in a nook of the well-jointed hut
And a woman lay by his side that from Lesbos he took,
Daughter of Phorbias, a prince, Diomeda the fair,
And Patroclus lay elsewhere and beside him there slept
Fair-girdled Iphis, the gift of Achilles to him
When rock-built Scyros, Enyeus' city, he took.
But when to the huts of Atrides the others were come,
The sons of Achaea, standing on this side and that,
Pledg'd them in goblets of gold and question'd them,
And the King of men, Agamemnon, ask'd them the first:
'Come, tell me, noble Odysseus, prudent of speech,
Is he willing to ward from our ships the ravening fire?
Or still does his anger that proud spirit possess?'

And to him did much-enduring Odysseus reply:
'Most glorious Atrides, King and ruler of men,
His anger is still unquench'd, nay rather the more
Is he fill'd with fury and spurns both thee and thy gifts.
He bids thee among the Argives devise for thyself
Some counsel to save the Achaeian host and the ships.
And soon as daylight breaks he threatens himself
To launch on the deep his trim-set, well-timber'd ships.
And this moreover he said; he would counsel you all
To sail away home, for the goal ye never may reach
Of Ilion steep, for over her far-seeing Zeus

Has stretch'd out his arm and with courage her people has fill'd.

So spake he and here are there others to tell you the same,
Ajax and both the heralds, wise men and grave.
But the old man Phoenix he laid to rest in his hut
And to-morrow will take him home in his swift-going ship,
That is, if he will; for he thinks not to take him by force.'

So spake he, and all were silent, holding their peace
In amaze at his words, for he spake to them vehemently.
Long were the sons of Achaea speechless for grief,
But stalwart Diomed spake among them at last:
'Most glorious Atrides, King and ruler of men,
Would thou hadst never besought Pelides for help
Nor offer'd the numberless gifts! He was proud at the best
But now thou hast rous'd in his spirit a deadlier pride.
But leave we Achilles, whether he tarry or no;
He will rise hereafter whenever the heart in his breast
Bids him to fight and a God his spirit shall rouse.
Come then, hear ye my saying and do what I bid:
Go ye now to your rest, having sated your hearts
With meat and with wine, wherein there is courage and
strength.

But to-morrow, so soon as appears the rose-finger'd dawn,
Array by the ships thy people, footmen and horse,
And exhort them and lead them thyself in the front of the fight.'
So spake he, and all the princes cried their assent
Applauding the saying of Diomed, tamer of horses,
And they made libation and went each man to his hut
And laid them to rest and the boon of slumber enjoy'd.

Agamemnon confers with Nestor. Dolon, a Trojan spy, is slain by Odysseus and Diomed, who kill the sleeping Thracians and make off with the horses of Rhesus.

So all the rest of the Danaans lay by the ships
 Nightlong slumbering, lapp'd in the bosom of sleep,
 But Atreus' son Agamemnon, shepherd of men,
 Sweet sleep held not, for care lay heavy on him.
 As the Lord of bright-hair'd Hera lightens from heaven
 When he fashions a mighty rain unutterable
 Or hailstorm or snow and the light flakes sprinkle the fields,
 Or fashions the mighty mouth of calamitous war,
 So heavily groan'd in his breast Agamemnon the King
 From the depths of his heart and his spirit trembled within:
 For now on the Trojan plain his eye would he rest
 Pondering the fires that in front of Ilion blaz'd
 And the shrilling of flutes and pipes and the voices of men,
 And now, as he gaz'd on the ships and the Danaan host,
 Many a lock from his head he would pluck by the roots,
 As he call'd to the Father on high, and groan in his heart.
 And this in his mind was the counsel that seem'd to him best,
 That first Neleian Nestor of all in the host
 He should seek for, and with him devise some excellent rede
 To ward the evil away from the Danaan host.
 And, rising, about his breast his doublet he donn'd
 And, binding his fair-wrought sandals upon his feet,
 The tawny hide of a fiery lion did on
 That reach'd to his feet, and took up his spear in his hands.
 Yet neither was King Menelaus holden of sleep
 But trembling likewise he lay lest evil befall
 The host that for his sake over the watery ways
 Had sail'd to the Trojan strand with war in their hearts.
 He now with the dappled skin of a leopard o'erspread
 His broad shoulders and rais'd and set on his brows
 A helmet of bronze and took up his spear in his hands
 And went to arouse his brother that mightily ruled
 O'er all the Achaeans, rever'd by his folk as a God.
 Him found he in act to gird his armour on him
 By the stern of his ship, and his coming was welcome to him;

And first fair-hair'd Menelaus his brother address'd:
'Why arnest thou thus, dear brother? Sendest thou forth
One of thy comrades to spy on the army of Troy?
I terribly fear that none will the task undertake
To go through the dead of the night and spy out the foe
Alone; a bold man were he, ay, hardy of heart.'

And him did King Agamemnon in answer address:
'Both I and thou, Menelaus foster'd of Zeus,
Verily need good counsel to save and protect
Our people and ships, for the mind of Cronion is chang'd
And his heart he has set upon Hector's offerings and prayers
Rather than ours, for never saw I nor heard
That one man devis'd in a day such terrible deeds
As Hector, his darling, has wrought on the sons of Achaea
Unaided, tho' no dear son of a Goddess or God.
Yea, ill he has wrought on the Argives so many and great
That methinks they will bring us affliction, lasting and long.
But go now, run thou swiftly, and Idomeneus
And Ajax summon, and I to Hector will go
And bid him straightway arise and visit the wall
And lay his charge on the sentinel company there;
Him will they surely obey, for his own son it is
That the sentries commands with Idomeneus' brother in arms
Meriones, for to these we entrusted the watch.'

And him did brave Menelaus in answer address:
'How meanest thou then by the bidding thou givest to me?
Shall I bide with them there and await thy coming to us
Or run back to find thee again, having given them thy word?'

And him did the Lord Agamemnon answer again:
'Bide where thou art, lest each other we miss on the way
For many indeed are the roads that lead through the camp.
Call thou aloud where thou goest and bid them awake.
And address each man by his lineage, naming his sire,
And give him his titles of honour; nor be thou o'erproud,
But rather let us be toiling, since even for us
Did Zeus from our birth the burden of labour decree.'
So spake he and sent him away, having giv'n him his charge,
And himself sought Neleian Nestor, shepherd of men,
Him did he find by his hut and his black-hull'd ship
On his drowsy bed, and beside him his fair armour lay,
A pair of spears and a shield and a helmet of bronze;
There too was the belt, resplendent, that girded his waist
Whenever the old man arm'd him for manslaying war
And led on the host, for to old age yielded he not;

And he rais'd himself on his elbow, lifting his head,
And spake to the son of Atreus, enquiring of him:
'Who art thou that goest alone through the dead of the night
Through the camp by the ships when all other men are asleep?
Seekest thou one of thy mules? or some comrade of thine?
Speak and approach not in silence; what is thy need?'

And to him did the King of men, Agamemnon, reply:
'Nestor, thou son of Neleus, our glory and pride,
'Tis Atreus' son, Agamemnon, whom Zeus above all
Vexes with toil unceasing, so long as the breath
Is strong in my breast and my limbs with life are astir.
And thus do I roam, for that sweet sleep visits me not
But war and the woes of Achaea are ever my care.
Yea, greatly I fear for the Argives; my spirit is faint,
Toss'd by phantoms of dread, and my labouring heart
Would leap from my breast, and my good knees tremble
beneath.

But if thou art for doing, for thou too art lying awake,
Come, let us go to the sentinels' station and see
That they be not with labour of watching and drowsiness spent
And so have fallen asleep and their vigil forgot,
For the enemy camps hard by and we know not at all
If the Trojans intend to do battle while yet it is night.'

And the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, answer'd again:
'Most glorious Atrides, King and ruler of men,
Assuredly Zeus will fulfil not every thought
In the heart of valiant Hector nor every hope.
Methinks there is yet more trouble and labour for him
If Achilles but turn from his grievous anger again.
I will go with thee gladly; but rouse we the others as well,
Diomed fam'd with the spear and goodly Odysseus,
The swift-footed Ajax and Phyleus' valiant son,
And 'twere well if someone would go and summon to us
Godlike Ajax and princely Idomeneus
Whose ships are the furthest away at the end of the line.
And then Menelaus—honour'd and dear tho' he be—
Yet I blame him, ev'n if the word thy anger arouse,
For sleeping and leaving to thee the labour alone;
He should be up and astir, beseeching the chiefs
To attend thee, for need is upon us not to be borne.'
And him did King Agamemnon answer again:
'Old man, another day my brother reproach,
For often indeed he slackens and gives us no help,
Yielding neither to sloth nor to dullness of wit

But looking to me and awaiting my instance or nod.
But now he awoke before me and came to me first
And I sent him to summon the others of whom thou didst
speak.

Then go we and then we shall find in front of the wall
At the sentinels' post where I bade them our coming await.'
So saying, about his breast his tunic he donn'd
And, binding his fair-wrought sandals under his feet,
Buckled around his shoulders a bright purple cloak,
Double-folded and wide and fleecy with down;
And he took up his stalwart spearshaft pointed with bronze
And went on his way by the ships of the bronze-mail'd
Achaeans.

There first Odysseus, in counsel a peer of the Gods,
Did the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, awaken from sleep,
Calling aloud, and the cry came home to his wits
And forth he came from his hut and a word to them spake:
'Why thus through the camp and the ships do ye wander alone
In the dead of the night? What need is this that has come?'

And to him did the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, reply:
'Heav'n-born son of Laertes, wary Odysseus,
Be thou not wroth; great trouble Achaea besets;
Come with us, rouse we yet others, whomso behoves
To give us his counsel, whether to flee or to fight.'
So spake he and prudent Odysseus enter'd his hut
And his great shield cast o'er his shoulders and went in their
steps.

Then came they to Tydeus' son and him did they find
Outside his hut in his armour, and round him his men
Were sleeping, pillow'd on shields, and the spears on their butts
Stood upright, spik'd in the ground, and the bronze shone afar
Like the lightning of Father Zeus; and Diomed slept
And beneath him was strewn the hide of an ox of the field
And under his head a bright-colour'd carpet was stretch'd.
And the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, stirr'd him and rous'd
With a touch of his foot and, addressing him, chidingly spake:
'Wake, son of Tydeus, why sleepest thou all night long?
Knowest thou not that the foe on the rise of the plain
Are camp'd near the ships? But a small space holds them
apart.'

He spake, and the hero at once sprang up out of sleep
And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
'Hard old man, unceasing as ever in toil,
Are there not sons of Achaea younger than thou

To range through the camp and awaken the princes from sleep?
Nay, old fighter, but thou art indomitable.'

And him did Gerenian Nestor in answer address:

'E'en so, dear son, all this thou hast spoken aright;
I have noble sons of my own, and many there be
In the rest of the host that might go and awaken the chiefs.
But great is the need that now the Achaeans besets;
It stands on a razor's edge for each one of us,
Either grievous ruin for all the Achaeans, or life.
Then go, if thou pitiest me, and rouse from their sleep
Fleet Ajax and Phyleus' son; thou art younger than I.'

So spake he and Diomed cast o'er his shoulders the skin
Of a fiery lion and took up his spear in his hand
And went on his way and the others rous'd from their sleep.
Then, all together, the sentinels' station they reach'd
Yet found they not one of the leaders asleep or disarm'd,
But each in his armour was sitting, awake and alert;
And even as dogs round a fold are disturb'd in their watch
When they hear some bold-hearted beast in the forested hills,
And great is the clamour about him of hounds and of men
As he comes through the wood, and sleep from the watchdogs is
gone,

E'en so from the sentinels' eyelids sweet sleep was gone
As they watch'd through that evil night, for always they turn'd
Towards the Trojans, straining their ears some movement to
catch,

And the old man was glad and enhearten'd the watchers and
spake:

'Keep well your watch, dear children, and none of you yield
To sleep, lest a cause of victory we be to our foes.'

So saying, he pass'd through the trench and within there went
The council of Argive princes call'd by the King
And Meriones and Nestor's glorious son,
For themselves had summon'd them both their counsels to
share;

And out of the deep-delv'd trench they hasten'd and sate
In an open space where the ground was clear of the dead
Just where furious Hector had turn'd him again
From slaying the Argives when night came down upon him.
There sitting, their counsel each to the other declar'd,

And the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, the parley began:

'Friends, is there no man among us with trust in himself
And his valiant soul 'mong the great-hearted Trojans to go
And perchance some straggler to take on the edge of the camp

Or haply some rumour among the Trojans o'erhear
Of what they devise in their counsels, whether resolv'd
From the city to stay where they are by the ships
Or now to return to their walls, having vanquish'd our arms.
All this might he hear and again to his comrades return
Scathless, and great under heav'n would his glory and fame
Be spread among men, and splendid would be his reward.
For all our noblest that here hold sway by the ships
Will, each of them, give him a ewe with a lamb at her foot,
A black-fleeced ewe, and no greater chattel there is,
And at communal meals and feastings a seat shall be his.'

He spake, and they all were silent, holding their peace,
And stalwart Diomed spake among them at last:
'Nestor, my heart and my proud spirit are fain
To enter the foemen's leaguer where near us they sit.
But yet, if some other Achaean accompany me,
The better the comfort and greater the courage will be;
If two go together, one may be quicker to see
Advantage on this side or that, but if one go alone
His sight may be shorter in range, and feebler his rede.'
So spake he, and many a man would with Diomed go;
Fain were the henchmen of Ares, the Ajaxes both,
Fain Meriones and Nestor's glorious son
And Atreus' son Menelaus, famed with the spear,
And fain above all was much-enduring Odysseus
For always his heart within him could suffer and dare.
And among them spake Atrides, ruler of men:
'Diomed, son of Tydeus, thou joy of my heart,
Choose thou a comrade thyself, whomsoever thou wilt,
The best among those that offer, for many are fain,
Nor force thou thy choice through regard for any to leave
The better behind and a worse companion take
Because of thy homage, e'en though he be Kinglier born.'
So spake he, fearing for fair-hair'd King Menelaus
And stalwart Diomed spake among them again:
'Seeing how ye bid me choose a comrade myself,
Verily goodly Odysseus is first in my mind
Whose proud spirit is ready to do or endure
All things, and Pallas Athena loves him full well.
With him as my comrade we both might hope to return
E'en out of blazing fire, for his excellent wit.'
And to him did much-enduring Odysseus reply:
'Tydeus, neither o'erpraise me nor chide me o'ermuch;
Thou speakest to men that have known me in fair and in foul.

Forward, then, for the night wanes and near is the dawn.
The stars go down to their setting, the night is advanc'd
To more than the half, and the third watch only is left.'
So they in their dread armour harness'd themselves;
Thrasymede, steadfast in battle, to Diomed gave
A two-edg'd sword, for his own was left by his ship,
And a shield, and about his head a helmet he set
Of bull's hide, crestless and coneless, a cap as it were
Such as covers the head of many a stout country youth.
And Meriones gave to Odysseus a quiver and bow
And a sword, and about his head a helmet he set
Of leather; with many a thong it was plaited within
Stiffly, and boars' teeth without it were thickly array'd
Gleaming white, that broider'd it this way and that—
'Twas well and cunningly wrought, with a lining of felt.
This casque Autolycus stole from Amyntor the King
When into his well-built palace in Eleon he stole
And gave as a gift to Cytheran Amphidamas,
And then to Molus, a prince, as a guest-gift it pass'd
Who gave it in turn to his own son Meriones,
And now did it shelter the head of goodly Odysseus.
And, when in their dread arms they had harness'd themselves,
They went on their foray, leaving the chiefs of the host
And Pallas Athena an omen sent on their right,
A heron flying—they saw it not with their eyes
Because of the darkness, but heard it cry as it pass'd.
And Odysseus, glad of the omen, pray'd to the Maid:
'Listen to me, thou daughter of all-ruling Zeus,
That ever in all my labours standest by me
And seest my every motion, be friendly again,
O Athena, and grant that we both may with glory return,
Having wrought on the Trojans a deed that shall bring on them
woe.'

And after him stalwart Diomed pray'd in his turn:
'Hear thou me also, O Goddess unweariable,
And attend me as once thou broughtest my father to Thebes
When Tydeus went as an envoy in front of the host;
The bronze-mail'd Achaeans encamp'd by Asopus he left
And bore to the sons of Cadmus a message of peace,
But homeward returning devis'd for them terrible things
With thee, dear Goddess, for thou didst stand at his side,
So now be gracious to me and stand at my side,
And a wide-brow'd heifer, a yearling, thy victim shall be
Unbroken, that no man ever has yok'd to the plough,

And her horns shall be gilded with gold, a sacrifice meet.'
So spake they in prayer and by Pallas Athena were heard
And, when they had pray'd to the daughter of all-ruling Zeus,
Through the blackness of night like a pair of lions they went
'Mid the carnage of dead men slain, through the arms and the
blood.

But neither did Hector suffer the Trojans to sleep
But summon'd together all that were noblest and best
Among the high-hearted Trojans, princes and chiefs;
These did he gather and crafty counsel devis'd;
'Who now will a deed of daring take on himself
For the gift that I promise, and large shall the recompense be,
A chariot with arch-neck'd horses, a pair of the best
That there be in the Danaan camp by the swift-going ships
To him that shall dare and the glory win for himself?
And this is the deed: to approach the swift-going ships
And learn whether still they be guarded, now as of old,
Or already the host of Achaeans, subdued to our hand,
Are devising a flight somewhither, nor care any more
For nightlong watching, by labour and weariness spent.'
He spake and they all were silent, holding their peace.
Now one of the Trojans, rich in gold and in bronze,
Was the son of Eumedes the herald, Dolon his name,
A man ill-favour'd to look on but swift on his feet,
And 'mong sisters five the only brother he was;
Who now to the Trojans and Hector his saying addressed:
'Hector, my heart and my proud spirit are fain
To approach the swift-going ships and hear what I may.
But I pray thee, hold up thy staff and swear me an oath
To give me the horses and chariot figur'd with bronze
That carry the blameless hero Pelëides,
And no vain spy will I be nor thy hope disappoint.
Straight to their camp will I go till I come to the ship
Of Lord Agamemnon himself, where the princes, methinks,
Will be holding their council, whether to flee or to fight.'
So spake he, and godlike Hector sware him the oath:
'My witness be Hera's lord, loud-thundering Zeus,
That no other man of the Trojans those horses shall mount;
Thou only shalt glory in them. My promise thou hast.'
So sware he a bootless oath, yet fired him to go,
And straightway he cast on his shoulders his crescented bow
And donn'd thereover a wolf-skin silvery grey,
And a ferret-skin casque on his head, and a javelin took
Forth he went, right eager, for little he dream'd

That never a word he should bring to Hector again;
And when through the throng of horses and men he had pass'd
He hasten'd forward, and goodly Odysseus was ware
Of someone approaching and Diomed straightway address'd:
'Seest thou, Diomed, someone that comes from the camp,
I know not whether to spy on the Danaan ships
Or strip of their armour the dead men slain on the field?
Let us watch till he pass us a little way over the plain,
And then may we rush out upon him and take him by force
Or else, if the chance to outrun us by fleetness of foot
Do thou head him off toward the ships and away from the
camp,
Rushing upon him, lest he to the city escape.'

He spake, and they turn'd from the path and lay 'mong the
dead
And he unaware went past them, running with speed;
But when he was so much away as a furrowlong is
Ploughing with mules, that are better than oxen by far
In drawing the jointed plough through the deep fallow soil,
They follow'd him fast, and he stood still, hearing the sound,
Deeming that some of his friends from the Trojans had come
At Hector's counter-command to summon him back:
But, when they were distant only a spearcast or less,
He knew them for foemen and plied right quickly his knees
In headlong flight and the others dash'd in pursuit.
As a couple of sharp-tooth'd hounds, well-skill'd in the chase,
Press hard through the greenwood glades on a doe or a hare,
Ever o'ertaking while she runs screaming before,
E'en so did the son of Tydeus and goodly Odysseus
Press hard after Dolon, cutting him off from the camp.
But when he had all but reach'd the watch at the wall,
As he fled toward the ships, Athena in Diomed breathed
Strength o'er measure, that none of the bronze-mail'd Achaeans
Might boast him the first to have smitten, and he be too late;
And stalwart Diomed cried as he leapt with his spear:
'Stand, or I strike with the spear, and thereafter, methinks,
Not long shall thy life escape sheer doom at my hands.'
So spake he and cast his spear, but aim'd it to miss
And over his right shoulder the point of it went
And stuck in the earth, and Dolon trembled and stood
Green with fear, and his teeth chatter'd with fright.
And Odysseus and Diomed came up panting and gripp'd
His hands, and he burst into tears and besought them and
spake:

'Take me alive for a ransom; there lies in our halls
Bronze uncounted and gold and hard-gotten iron
Whereof would my father enrich thee with measureless wealth
If he heard that I were alive by the Danaan ships.'

And him did prudent Odysseus an answer address:
'Courage! nor have any thought of death in thy mind.
But come now, tell me, I pray thee, and say but the truth,
Why goest thou thus so far from thy leaguer, alone
Through the blackness of night, when all other men are asleep?
Is it to strip of their armour the dead on the field
Or has Hector sent thee to spy what things are afoot
By the hollow ships, or camest thou forth of thyself?'
Him Dolon answer'd, and still he trembled for fear:
'With many a blind lure did Hector lead me astray,
Saying that the whole-hoov'd horses of Pelëides
I should have as a gift, and his chariot figur'd with bronze,
For he bade me go through the darkness of swift-falling night
And approach the camp of our foemen and learn if I might
Whether the swift ships be guarded, now as of old,
Or already the host of Achaea, subdued to our hands,
Are devising a flight somewhither nor care any more
For nightlong watching, by labour and weariness spent.'

And him with a smile did wary Odysseus address:
'Truly, thy heart was set on a worthy reward,
The horses of Aeacides, immortal in breed,
But hard are they for a mortal to tame or to drive.
But come now, tell me, I pray thee, and say but the truth;
Where didst thou leave great Hector, shepherd of men?
And his warlike armour and horses, where do they lie?
And the Trojans' watch and their bivouac, tell me of them
And what they devise in their counsels, whether resolv'd
Far from the city to stay where they are by the ships
Or now to return to their walls, having vanquish'd our arms.'
And him did the son of Eumedes answer again:
'Lo now, all will I tell thee and say but the truth;
Godlike Hector and they that our counsellors are
Hard by the barrow of Ilus in council are set
Away from the din of the camp, but as for the watch
Whereof thou dost ask me, no chosen sentries we have;
The Trojans themselves, as thou seest, keep burning their fires
(For on them necessity lies) and call on each other
Unsleeping to watch, but our allies summon'd from far
Slumber and trust to the Trojans their watches to keep,
For their wives and children are safe and dwell not in Troy.'

And him did wary Odysseus in answer address:
'Now tell me of them; do they share with the Trojans their
camp

Or lie they apart? And mind that thy answer be clear.'

And him did the son of Eumedes answer again:

'All this will I tell thee clearly and set forth the truth;

By the sea lie Paeons and Carians, men of the bow,

Caucones, Leleges, other Pelasgian folk;

Towards Thymbra the Lycians and high-hearted Mysians lie,
Horsemen of Phrygia and they of Maeonia.

But why should I run through the host, to tell you of each?

For if ye are minded indeed to enter the camp,

Here, new come, are the Thracians, apart from the rest,

With Rhesus their King, the son of Eioneus.

His are the finest horses that ever I saw,

Whiter than snow and in fleetness swift as the wind;

His chariot also is fashion'd of silver and gold

And the arms he has brought are beautiful, golden throughout,

A marvel to see, scarce fit for a mortal to wear

But such as beseems the deathless Immortals alone.

And now either take me amidst your swift-going ships

Or bind me with thongs and leave me to wait on the field

Until ye have gone to the camp my saying to prove

And see with your eyes whether truth I have spoken or no.'

Him then did Diomed, louting upon him, address:

'Hear me now, Dolon; for all that thy tidings are good

Cherish no thought of escape, being once in our hands.

For if now we release thee or leave thee to go to thy friends,

Another day thou wilt come to the swift-going ships

Either to spy or in open battle to fight,

But if once, subdued to my hands, thou yield up thy life,

Never again shalt thou be to the Argives a bane.'

And Dolon lifted his hand and his chin would have touch'd

To beg him for mercy, but Diomed smote on his neck

With a sweep of his sword and sever'd the tendons in two,

And his lips, still speaking, mingled on earth with the dust.

And straightway they stripp'd from his head the ferret-skin
helm

And his wolf-skin took and his spear and his crescented bow

And goodly Odysseus held them aloft in his hands

To Athena, Lady of Spoils, and utter'd his prayer:

'Have joy, O Goddess, of these; thee first we invoke

Of all the Olympian Gods. Do thou speed us again

To the horses and sleeping-ground of the Thracian King.'

So pray'd he aloud and lifted the spoils in his hands
And hung on a tamarisk bush, and a mark on it set
Conspicuous, reeds and lush-growing tamarisk shoots,
Lest the place they should miss in the darkness when home-
ward they turn'd.

Then onward they sped through slain men's armour and blood
And quickly arriv'd at the camp of the Thracian men.
There slept they, with weariness spent, and their beautiful arms
Lay on the ground beside them in order arrang'd,
Three long rows, and by each man his horses were tied;
And Rhesus slept in their midst and his fleet-footed steeds
Were tether'd by thongs to the golden chariot-rail,
And Odysseus espied him afar and to Diomed spake:
'Look, Diomed, there is our man, and there are the horses
That Dolon told us about ere we put him to death.
Come now, put forth thy prowess, arm'd as thou art;
Behoves not to stand here idle; loosen the horses
Or do thou do the slaying and leave the horses to me.'

He spake, and Athena breathed in Diomed strength
And he slew right and left and hideous the groaning arose
Of men that were stricken and earth was reddened with blood,
As a lion comes on a flock, untended by herds,
Of goats or of sheep, and assails them with death in his heart,
E'en so did Diomed set on the Thracian men
Till twelve he had slain, and whomso he slew with the sword
Him straightway Odysseus of many devices would seize
By the foot from behind and hale him out of the way
With this in his mind, that the fair-man'd horses of each
Might easily pass when he loos'd them nor tremble with fear
When they trod on the bodies, unused to a dead man as yet.
But when at the last Tydides came to the King,
The thirteenth was he that Diomed reft of his life
Gasping, so dreadful a thing stood over his head
That night, like an evil dream, through Athena's device.
And meanwhile hardy Odysseus the horses untied
And coupled together and drove them from out of the press
As he smote with his bow, for it never enter'd his mind
To take from its socket the shining whip in the car,
And then to his godlike comrade he whistled a sign.
But he still ponder'd what boldest deed he might do,
To take the chariot wherein were the glorious arms
And drag it forth by the pole, or to carry it out,
Or yet more of the Thracians bereave of their lives.
And while thus in his heart he debated, Athena drew near

And stood and a word to godlike Diomed spake:
'Son of great-hearted Tydeus, bethink thee at once
Of return to the hollow ships, lest thou go there in flight
And perchance some other Immortal the Trojans arouse.'
She spake, and the hero knew 'twas the Goddess's voice
And sprang on the car, and Odysseus smote with his bow
And the horses flew to the swift-going Danaan ships.
But no blind watch kept Apollo, Lord of the bow,
When he saw Athena with Diomed busy herself
And in anger he stole to the Trojan leaguer and rous'd
One of the Thracian counsellors, Hippocöon,
Nephew of Rhesus, a prince, who woke out of sleep
And, seeing the empty place where the horses had stood
And the brave warriors that gasp'd in their death agony
Groan'd aloud and call'd on his comrades by name.
And there rose 'mong the Trojans a clamour unutterable
As they rush'd in amaze to gaze on the terrible deeds
Those heroes had wrought ere they went to the camp by the
ships.

Now reach'd those others the place where Dolon was slain,
And Odysseus pull'd at the reins and the chariot stay'd
And Tydides leapt to the ground and the blood-spatter'd spoils
Set in the hands of Odysseus and mounted again
And lash'd the horses and nothing loath did they fly
To the hollow ships, for there they would willingly be.

And Nestor was first to hear them and spake to the chiefs:
'Friends, captains and counsellors all that in Argos have power,
Am I wrong, or say I the truth? My heart bids me speak
For the beat of the hooves of horses strikes on my ears.
O that Odysseus and Diomed soon we may see
Driving home from the Trojans the spoil they have won'
Yet sorely I fear in my heart lest ill have befallen
The best of the Argives and this be the din of pursuit.'
Not yet was his whole word spoken when they from the car
Leapt down to the earth and their comrades beheld them with
joy

And greeted with clasping of hands and welcoming words,
And the Knight, Gerenian Nestor, was first to enquire:
'Tell me, renown'd Odysseus, the pride of Achaea,
How took ye these glorious steeds? Did ye enter the camp
Of the Trojans, or met ye some God that gave them to you?
Their splendour surpasses even the beams of the sun.
Daily I mix with the Trojans, I do you to wit,
And hide not myself by the ships, old man tho' I be,

Yet never did see with my eyes nor deem in my heart
Of horses like these; some God must have giv'n them to you.
For ye both are beloved of Zeus that gathers the clouds
And of grey-eyed Athena, the daughter of all-ruling Zeus.'
And him did the wary Odysseus in answer address:
'Neleian Nestor, Achaea's glory and pride,
Nobler horses than these might a God to a man
Give if he would, for the Gods are stronger than we,
But the horses thou seest, old sire, are Thracian bred,
New come to Troy, and their master did Diomed slay
And twelve of his comrades beside him, the bravest and best;
The thirteenth man was a spy that we slew by the ships,
Sent forth by Hector and other chieftains of Troy
To pry on the Danaan camp and something o'erhear.'

So saying, in triumph the single-hoov'd horses he drave
Through the trench, and the other Achaeans with joy followed
on

And as soon as they came to Tydides' well-jointed hut
The horses with well-cut thongs in the stable they tied
To the manger-rack, where Diomed's fleet-footed steeds
Of the breed of Tros stood champing the honey-sweet corn,
And Dolon's blood-spatter'd spoils they set in the stern
Of the black-hull'd ships, a gift for Athena to be;
And themselves went into the sea to wash from their limbs,
Shins and shoulders and thighs, the sweat and the gore.
But soon as the wave of the sea had scour'd from their skin
The thick-clotted sweat and their spirits within them reviv'd,
Then enter'd they well-polish'd baths and wash'd them again
And thereafter with oil of olive anointed themselves
And sat to their supper, but first a drink-offering pour'd
To the Goddess, grey-eyed Athena, of honey-sweet wine.

*The Greeks and Trojans fight and the Greek champions
one after the other are driven wounded from the field.*

AND Dawn from her couch, where by proud Tithónus she
slept,
Rose, bringing the light of day to Immortals and men;
And Zeus sent Strife to the Danaan camp by the ships,
Fell goddess, that, holding on high the emblem of war,
Her station took on the huge black ship of Odysseus
Midmost the line, so that left and right they might hear
Ev'n from the huts of Ajax, Telamon's son,
To Achilles' huts, for they guarded the ends of the line
Trusting their valorous hearts and the strength of their hands.
There standing she utter'd a great and terrible shout,
Shrill-voic'd, and wonderful strength in the Danaans' breasts
Inspir'd for the battle, and steel'd them to fight to the end;
And war to them all was straightway sweeter than home
Or to sail in their ships to their own dear country afar.

And Atrides shouted and call'd the Achaeans to arm,
And himself also his gleaming armour he donn'd:
First on his shins the hero fasten'd the greaves,
Beautiful handiwork, clasp'd with anklets of silver;
And next his corslet about his breast he did on
That Cinyras once on a day as a guest-gift had sent,
For to Cyprus afar the mighty rumour had reach'd
Of how the Achaeans would sail to Ilion's strand,
And therefore the corslet he sent to pleasure the King;
Ten bands it had on its surface of cyanus black
And twelve of glittering gold and twenty of tin,
And three blue serpents upward writh'd to the throat,
On either side, like the rainbow set in a cloud
By Cronion the Lord of the Storm for a portent to men;
And then from his shoulders he slung his gold-studded sword
That dazzled the eye, but the scabbard round it was all
Of silver white, well-fitted with hangers of gold;
And he took his shield impetuous, covering a man,
A marvellous work: ten circles of bronze at the edge
Went round it, and on it were twenty bosses of tin
All white, and one in the midst of cyanus black,

There too was the frightful Gorgon set in a ring,
Stonily staring, and Terror and Dread at her side:
A silver baldric it had whereon there was wrought
A curling serpent in blue, three heads interlac'd
From one neck growing and twisting this way and that;
And his helmet he donn'd, four-plated on either ridge
And horsehair-plum'd, that terribly nodded its crest,
And lastly he chose two spears that were pointed with bronze
Keen-temper'd, and up to the heaven the bronze on them
gleam'd,

Whereat Athena and Hera thunder'd on high
To honour the King of Mycène, city of gold.

Then each of them gave in charge to his charioteer
The horses, to range them in order hard by the trench,
While themselves in their fighting armour bustled about,
And there rose a cry unquenchable meeting the Dawn.
And the chiefs, in a line, took up their stations in front
With the charioteers behind them, and Zeus in their midst
Awaken'd an evil din and from heaven above
Rain'd down a blood-dripping dew for a sign that he will'd
Many a strong man to send to the house of the dead.

And the Trojans array'd them too on the rise of the plain
Round mighty Hector and blameless Polydamas
And Aeneas, by all the people revered as a God,
And Antenor's sons, Agénor and Polybus brave
And Acamas, still unwedded, a peer of the Gods.
But Hector bore 'mong the foremost the orb of his shield:
As a baleful star for a while shines clear mid the clouds
Twinkling, but soon is eclips'd by the shadowy clouds,
So godlike Hector now could be seen in the van
And now to the rear would he move, and the bronze on him
flash'd

Like the lightnings of Zeus when his stormy aegis he shakes.

As reapers facing each other, when cutting the corn,
Drive their swaths till they meet, in a rich man's field
Of barley or wheat, and thickly in handfuls it falls,
So did the Trojans and Danaans leap on each other
Slaying, and neither bethought them of ruinous flight,
But evenly stretch'd were their lines, and rushing like wolves
They grappled, and woeful Discord rejoic'd at the sight.
She alone of the Gods 'mong the fighters appear'd
For none of the rest were afield, but careless they sat
In their own halls and at peace, where the mansion of each,
Goodly and fair, in the folds of Olympus was built;

Yet all were reproaching Cronion, the Lord of the Storm,
Because to the Trojans he will'd the glory to give,
But of thém did he take no heed, but aloof from them all
On Olympus sat by himself, exulting with pride
As he watch'd the city of Troy and the Danaan ships
And the flashing of bronze and brave men slaying and slain.

While yet 'twas morning, and waxing still was the day,
So long did they strike at each other and warriors fell,
But about the hour when a woodcutter thinks of his meal
In the glades of a mountain, and rests after tiring his hands
With felling of trees, and weariness comes on his soul
And hunger for food's sweet sustenance seizes on him,
E'en then by their valour the Danaans, cheering each other,
The phalanxes broke. And first Agamemnon himself
Rush'd forward and spear'd Biánor, shepherd of men,
And his comrade Òileus beside him, his charioteer;
For Òileus had leapt to the ground to challenge the King,
But he smote on his brow with a spear, as he eagerly charg'd,
And the brazen rim of his helmet stay'd not the point
But it pass'd through helmet and bone, and the brain of the man
Was shatter'd and spilt; and so was his eagerness tamed.
These did the King, Agamemnon, leave where they fell,
Their breasts all gleaming, stript of their glorious arms.
Then went he forward and Isus and Antiphus slew,
Two sons of Priam (but one was a bastard) and both
In one car riding, the bastard as charioteer
While Antiphus fought at his side. Achilles had once
On the spurs of Ida these brothers with osiers bound,
Having caught them herding their sheep, and had ransom'd for
gold,

And now did the King of men transfix with a spear
Isus over the breast and the other he smote
Hard by the ear with his sword, and they crash'd from the car;
Then quickly their goodly armour the hero despoil'd
Knowing them well, for of old in the camp by the ships
He had seen them when swift-foot Achilles brought them in
bonds.

As a lion easily crunches the innocent fawns
Of a fleet-footed hind, with his strong teeth seizing on them
When he enters their lair, and their tender life he devours,
While the hind, if she chance to be near, no whit can avail
To save them, for ev'n on herself dread terror is come
And she races swiftly away through forest and brake
Panting and sweating before the rush of the beast,

E'en so not one of the Trojans could save them from death
For themselves in panic were fleeing over the plain.

And next Pisander he took and Hippolochus,
Sons of wise Antimachus: he was the chief
Of those that aforetime the gold of Paris receiv'd
To keep from King Menelaus Helen his wife,
And now Agamemnon encounter'd two of his sons
In one car driv'n, for their fleet-footed horses they shar'd;
But the shining reins, as it chanc'd, had slipp'd from their
hands

And the horses were all distraught when he set upon them
Like a lion, and they from their chariot suppliant cried:
'Take us alive, O King, and a ransom accept,
For treasures there lie in the halls of Antimachus,
Bronze uncounted and gold and hard-gotten iron;
Of these would our father enrich thee with ransom untold
If we heard we two were alive by the Danaan ships.'
So cried they weeping and thought the King to appease
With their soft words, but no softness they heard in his voice:
'If ye of a truth are the wise Antimachus' sons
That urg'd the Trojan assembly my brother to slay
When he went with godlike Odysseus to parley with them
That never again to the ships he might living return,
Verily now for your father's shame ye shall pay.'
So said he and dash'd Pisander to earth from the car
Spear-struck in the breast, and he lay on his back in the dust,
But the other he slew on the ground as he darted away
And sever'd his arms and his neck with a stroke of the sword,
Then trundled his trunk like a roller into the throng.
So left he these and, where thickest the phalanxes storm'd,
Rush'd in, and with him the other Achaeans in arms;
There footmen footmen assail'd as they drove them in flight,
And horsemen horsemen, wreaking their rage with the bronze,
And beneath them, stirr'd by the horses' thundering hooves,
Arose the dust from the plain. But still did the King
Slaying pursue them, and call'd his Danaans on:
As when ruinous fire has fall'n on an osier copse
Whirl'd by the wind, and the thickets are burnt to the roots
And utterly perish before the onset of fire,
So fell before Agamemnon many a head
Of the Trojans fleeing, and many a strong-neck'd horse
Rattled the empty cars on the highways of war
Lacking their charioteers, for they on the earth
Were lying, to vultures dearer by far than to wives.

But Hector had Zeus drawn clear of the darts and the dust,
Away from the carnage of battle, the blood and the din,
Where Atrides pursued and eagerly call'd to his men
And the Trojans beyond Dardanian Ilus's tomb
And past the place of the fig-tree over the plain
Stream'd, making for Troy, while Atrides still with his shout
Pursued, his invincible hands bespatter'd with gore.
But when to the Scaean gates and the oak-tree they came,
There cried the Trojans a halt and awaited each other,
For thousands still on the plain were fleeing, like kine
That a prowling lion has scar'd in the dead of the night,
A whole herd, but for one sheer death he prepares
And, breaking her neck as his strong teeth fasten in her,
Greedily laps with his tongue her entrails and blood;
E'en so did the son of Atreus the Trojans pursue,
And ever the hindmost he smote as in panic they fled,
And many a one fell from his car on his face or his back
'Neath Atrides' hands, for he mightily raged with the spear.
But when now he was come to the beetling rampart of Troy,
E'en then beheld him the Father of Gods and of men,
And on many-fountain'd Ida he seated himself
Descending from heav'n with the thunder-bolt in his hands;
And Iris, the golden-wing'd, with a message he sent:
'Away, fleet Iris, and speak to Hector a word:
So long as he sees Agamemnon, shepherd of men,
Rage in the van and lay the battalions low,
So long let him hold him aloof and the others command
To fight with the foe in the murderous mellay of war.
But whenso, wounded with arrow or stricken with spear,
Atrides leaps to his chariot, then will I give him
Strength to slay till he come to the well-timber'd ships
And the sun go down and the sacred darkness prevail.'
So spake the Father, and wind-shod Iris obey'd
And down from the crests of Ida to Ilion came,
And godlike Hector, the son of Priam, she found
Where among the horses and well-framed chariots he stood;
And fleet-footed Iris halted beside him and spake:
'Hector, thou son of Priam, in counsel a God,
Lo! Zeus the Father has sent thee a message by me:
So long as thou seest Agamemnon, shepherd of men,
Rage in the van and lay the battalions low,
So long hold back from the fray and the others command
To fight with the foe in the murderous mellay of war.
But whenso, wounded with arrow or stricken with spear,

Atrides leaps to his chariot, then will He give thee
Strength to slay till thou come to the well-timber'd ships
And the sun go down and the sacred darkness prevail.'
So speaking fleet-footed Iris was gone on her way,
But Hector, arm'd, from his chariot leapt to the ground
And went through the ranks of the Trojans, shaking his spears
And bidding them fight, and the dreadful war-cry awak'd.
And wheeling they rallied again the Achaeans to face,
And the Argives also their phalanxes strengthen'd and dress'd,
And the battle was order'd anew. And Atrides was first
To rush on them, eager to fight in front of them all.

Tell me, ye Muses, that mansions have in Olympus,
Who was it first encounter'd Atrides the King,
Either Trojan himself or one of their allies renown'd?
Antenor's son, Iphidamas stalwart and brave,
Who was nurtur'd in deep-soil'd Thracia, mother of flocks,
Where Kisseus rear'd him, his daughter's child, in his halls,
For Kisseus his lovely mother, Theano, begat.
And then, when he came to the stature of glorious youth,
To keep him at home he gave him a daughter to wed,
But, a bridegroom still, from his bridal-chamber he went
And with twelve beak'd vessels follow'd the rumour of Troy.
His ships he had left at Percóta, beaching them there,
And himself on foot with his Thracians to Ilion came;
'Twas he that King Agamemnon found in his path,
And when face to face they were met, Atrides was first
To cast with his spear but awry, for it swerv'd in its flight,
And then Iphidamas thrust at him low on the belt
And press'd on the spear with all the weight of his hands
Yet pierc'd not the gleaming girdle, for long ere he might
The point was turn'd on the silver as tho' it were lead;
And Atrides caught at the shaft and pull'd it aside
Fierce as a lion, and, wresting it out of his grasp,
Smote on his neck with the sword and loosen'd his knees.
So there did he lie, and an iron slumber he slept,
Far from the bride of his youth, most piteously,
Of whom no joy he had known for all he had paid—
A hundred kine he had giv'n, and of sheep and of goats
Had promis'd a thousand, for flocks unnumber'd he had;
And there Agamemnon despoil'd the youth of his arms
And dash'd with the goodly harness into the throng.

But Cöon, his eldest brother, a prince among men,
Beheld him fallen, and strong grief came upon him
For his brother slain on the field and darken'd his eyes,

And standing aside with his spear, unmark'd of the King,
On the thick of Atrides' arm 'neath the elbow he smote,
And the gleaming point of the spear went clean through the
limb;

And the King of men, Agamemnon, shudder'd with pain
Yet e'en so ceas'd not a whit from battle and war
But rush'd upon Cöon, grasping his wind-nurtur'd spear.
Now Cöon was dragging his brother from out of the press
By the foot, right eager, and calling the best of his men,
When Atrides, aiming beneath the rim of his shield,
Struck with his bronze-shod spear and loosen'd his knees
And then o'er the corpse of Iphidamas cut off his head:
So there Antenor's sons at the hand of the King
Went down to Hades, fulfilling their measure of fate.

Still Agamemnon ranged through the ranks of the foe
With spear and sword and with mighty fragments of stone
So long as the liquid blood well'd warm from his wound,
But soon as the wound grew dry and stanch'd was the blood,
Sharp pangs came on him, searching the might of Atrides:
Keen as the pangs that come on a woman in travail,
The piercing arrows of pain by the Goddesses sent,
The daughters of Hera, whose gifts are the travail-throes,
So bitter the pangs that came on the might of Atrides,
And he leapt to his chariot bidding his charioteer
Drive to the hollow ships, sore vex'd in his soul,
And cried with a piercing shout to the Danaan men:
'Friends, captains and counsellors all, that in Argos have power,
Now is it yours to ward from the sea-going ships
Dire din of battle, for Zeus in his wisdom forbids
That I with the Trojans contend all day in the fight.'
He spake, and the charioteer laid lash to his team
Straight for the ships, and nothing loath did they fly;
Foam-stain'd were their breasts and their bellies cak'd with
the dust

As they carried the stricken Atrides out of the fight.

But Hector, so soon as he mark'd that Atrides was gone,
With a loud shout to the Trojans and Lycians cried:
'Ye Trojans and Lycians, Dardans that fight in the press,
Prove yourselves men nor your furious valour forget:
The best of them all has departed and glory to me
Cronion has giv'n. Now straight at the Danaans drive
Your whole-hoov'd steeds, that your boast may of victory be.'
So spake he and stirr'd the strength and the spirit of each;
And ev'n as a hunter heartens his white-tooth'd hounds

'Gainst a boar of the wild or a lion, tarring them on,
So Hector, in spirit like Ares destroyer of men,
Cheer'd the great-hearted Trojans against the Achaeans
And himself 'mong the foremost with thoughts of victory strode
And fell on the fight like a roaring whirlwind on high
That leaps from the heaven to stir the violet sea.

Whom first, whom last, did the son of Priam o'erthrow
In that his glorious day, when Zeus was his help?
Asaeus first, Autonöus, lordly Opites,
Opheltius, Dolops Clytius' son, Ageläus,
Aesymnus and Orus, and stalwart Hipponöus:
These were the captains he slew, and thereafter he smote
The nameless herd, as when Zephyrus buffets the clouds
Of the whitening South and drives them in violent storm,
And the wave rolls swelling before, and the spindrift on high
By contrary winds is scatter'd, filling the air:
So thickly the heads of the many 'neath Hector were strewn.
There had ruin and doom irreparable
Been wrought, and the fleeing Achaeans had fall'n at the ships,
But Odysseus to Tydeus' son, great Diomed, call'd:
'What ails us that we our impetuous valour forget?
Come, friend, stand at my side, for shame will it be
For Achaea, if bright-plum'd Hector capture the ships.'
And him great Diomed straightway in answer addressed:
'Yea, I will stand and endure: but respite through us
Long cannot last, since the Cloud-compeller has will'd
To grant to the Trojans victory rather than us.'
So spake he and dash'd Thymbraeus out of his car,
Spear'd in the left breast, and wary Odysseus the while
Molion o'erthrew, the godlike squire of the prince.
There did they leave them together, resting from war,
And storm'd through the press like a pair of fiery boars
That, trusting their valour, turn on the hounds of a hunt:
So turn'd they in fury and slew, and the Danaan host
Were fain of the breathing-space as from Hector they fled.
There took they a chariot also, and two of the best
Of the Trojans, Merops's sons, who was skill'd above all
In soothsaying-craft nor would suffer his children to go
To ruinous war, but their father they not a whit
Would obey, for the fates of death were leading them on;
Whom now the valiant Diomed, spearman renown'd,
Reft of their life and stripp'd of their glorious arms,
While Odysseus brave Hippodamus spoil'd and his squire.
Then did Cronion the battle in equipoise set

As he watch'd from the mount, and they slew each other amain.
And Diomed first with his spear Agástrophus smote,
Paeon's son, in the groin, but his horses alack!
Were nowhere at hand, for blindness his heart had possess'd—
In the rear was his squire with the horses, while he in the van
Went raging afoot, and he lost his piteous life.
But Hector was swift to espy it and on them he rush'd
Shouting, and with him the Trojan phalanxes charg'd,
And Diomed, valiant warrior, shudder'd to see
And Odysseus straightway address'd, not far from his side:
'Now rolls this ruin from furious Hector on us;
Come, let us face him and stand, and his onset repel.'
So spake he and brandish'd and hurl'd his long-shadow'd spear
And struck where he aim'd, not missing the helmeted head
On the topmost crest, but bronze was ward'd by bronze
And reach'd not the delicate flesh but was stay'd by the ridge
Of the three-plated helmet, the gift of Apollo to him.
But Hector a marvellous space sprang back to the rear
And mix'd with the throng and fell to his knees, and his hand
He lean'd on the ground as black night shrouded his eyes;
And while yet Tydides follow'd the cast of his spear
Far through the fight, where he saw it fall to the earth,
Hector came to himself and leapt to his car
And drove through the press and avoided the blackness of
death.

But, rushing on with his spear, great Diomed spake:
'Dog, so again thou escapest imminent death!
Yet near was thy bane if Apollo had sav'd not thy life,
To whom thou surely must pray mid the clashing of spears.
Yet mark thou my word: I shall meet thee hereafter and slay
If anywhere one of the Gods my helper may be;
But now will I match me with others, whomso I find.'
So saying, the son of Paeon he stripp'd of his arms.

But, seeing him, Paris, that bright-hair'd Helen had wed,
Aim'd an arrow at Diomed, shepherd of men,
And lean'd, as he shot, on a pillar of Ilus's tomb,
Dardanus' son, that of old was an elder in Troy.
Tydides was stripping the stalwart Agastrophus' arms,
The glittering coat from his breast and the shield from his side
And the heavy helmet, when Paris sighted his bow
And shot, and the shaft from his fingers flew not amiss
But struck, and pierc'd through the flat of Diomed's foot
And pinn'd it to earth; and sweetly laughing thereat
Paris leapt from his ambush and boastingly cried:

'Thou art hit, nor aim'd I in vain; yet rather would I
In thy nether belly have struck thee and reft thee of life.
Then would the Trojans have breathed from their troubles
again,

Who, like bleating goats at a lion, shudder at thee.'
Him, naught dismay'd, did the son of Tydeus address:
'Curl'd minion, bowman, reviler, ogler of girls,
Wouldst thou but try me in armour, man against man,
Thy bow and its shower of arrows should nothing avail,
But now thou dost boast, having graz'd but the sole of my foot;
I care not, more than if boy or woman had struck,
For blunt is the point of a craven, worthless in war.
Far other the shaft that I aim; tho' it enter not deep,
Yet sharply it bites and straightway lays a man low,
And the cheeks of his widow are dug with the nails of her hands,
And his children are orphans, while, reddening the earth with
his blood,

He rots, more vultures than women flocking around.'
So spake he, and spear-fam'd Odysseus ran to his side
And stood before him, and Diomed, crouching behind,
Drew forth the barb, and a sharp pang shot through his flesh,
And he leapt to his chariot bidding his charioteer
Drive back to the hollow ships, sore griev'd in his heart.

But alone was Odysseus, and none of the Danaans now
Stay'd by his side, for terror had seiz'd on them all,
And, troubled, the hero spake to his valiant heart:
'Ah me, what now shall befall? great evil it were
From numbers to flee, but yet to be taken alone
Were harder, now Zeus the Achaeans has scatter'd in flight,
Yet wherefore thus does my spirit debate with herself?
Well know I that those are cravens that run from the fight,
And whoso in war is a hero, him it behoves
To stubbornly stand, whether slain or slayer he be.'
While thus he ponder'd and spake to his own great heart,
The ranks came on of the Trojans under their shields
Hemming him in, but they set their bane in their midst:
As when hounds and lusty hunters assail in his lair
A wilding boar, and he breaks from his covert of thorn
Whetting a tusk in his crinkled jaws, and the hunt
Rush to surround him, and loudly he gnashes his teeth,
But still they await his attack, so dread as he is,
E'en so did the swarming Trojans Odysseus beset.
And first the blameless Dëiopítes he smote
From above, on the shoulder, leaping to strike with his spear,

Then Thöon also and Ennomus slew and despoil'd;
Cherisidamas next, as he darted away from his car,
Under the guard of his shield on the navel he smote,
And he fell in the dust and clutch'd at the earth with his palm.
These left he lying, and wounded Hippasus' son,
Charops, the brother of Socus wealthy in goods;
And godlike Socus, to help his brother at need,
Ran to his side and spake to Odysseus a word:
'Odysseus, of labour and craft insatiable,
To-day shalt thou either boast o'er Hippasus' sons
That thou slewest them both and didst spoil them both of their
arms

Or by my spear shalt be stricken and forfeit thy life.'
So spake he and drave at the mighty orb of his shield,
And the ponderous spear-head pass'd through the glittering
shield

And clean through his daedal corslet, driv'n by the thrust,
And tore all the flesh from his ribs, but Athena was by
And check'd it and suffer'd it not with his vitals to mix,
And Odysseus knew that no mortal wound he had got.
Then, drawing backward, to Socus spake he a word:
'Ah miserable! sheer destruction upon thee is come;
'Tis true, thou hast stay'd me from fighting the Trojans a while,
But I tell thee that here this day thy portion shall be
Slaying and death, when thou, by my spear overthrown,
To me the glory shalt give and to Hades thy soul.'
So spake he, and Socus turn'd and away would have fled,
But ev'n as he turn'd he planted the spear in his back
Betwixt his shoulders and drove it straight through his breast,
And he fell with a crash, and Odysseus vaunted himself:
'Socus! thou son of Hippasus tamer of horses,
This is thy fated end, thou escapest it not;
Hapless of men! thy father and mother belov'd
Shall close not thy eyes in death, but carrion birds
Shall tear thee, beating around thee their myriad wings;
But to me, if I perish, my friends due burial will give.'

So spake he vaunting and wise-hearted Socus's spear
At once drew forth from his flesh and the shield it had pierced,
And his blood as he drew it gush'd and afflicted him sore.
And the great-hearted Trojans, seeing the blood of Odysseus,
At once with clamorous cries came thronging on him,
But Odysseus, retreating before them, call'd to his friends;
Thrice he shouted with all the strength of his voice,
And thrice Menelaus heard the reverberant shout,

And quickly to Ajax he spake, not far from his side:
'Hark! Telamonian Ajax, chieftain of men,
The shout of hardy Odysseus rings in my ears,
Calling as tho' his enemies held him at bay
Cut off from his friends in the murderous mellay of war.
Let us go to his help through the press, for so it is best.
I fear lest evil befall him, as brave as he is,
And bitter grief for his loss on the Danaans come.'
Then led he the way, and Ajax follow'd him close,
And they found Odysseus at bay with the Trojans around
On every side, as when tawny jackals beset
A horned stag that a hunter has shot on the hills
With a shaft from his bow, and the stag by his fleetness escapes
So long as his blood runs warm and his limbs are astir,
But soon as the piercing arrow his strength has o'ercome
The murderous jackals worry him up in the hills
In a shadowy glade; but God sends thither a lion
Rav'ning, and he those jackals scatters and rends:
E'en so round wily Odysseus his enemies swarm'd,
Many and mighty, but, darting this way and that,
He thrust with his spear and averted the pitiless day.
Then Ajax beside him, bearing his shield like a tower,
Stood, and the Trojans scatter'd on every side,
And brave Menelaus guided him out of the press
Holding his hand, till his squire with the chariot came.

But Ajax leapt on the foe and Doryclus o'erthrew,
Priam's son but a bastard, and Pandocus smote,
And Lysander and Pyrasus too and Pylartes he smote.
As at times a raging river descends on the plain
In winter-flood from the mountains, swollen by rain,
And many a founder'd oak and many a pine
It swallows, with gravel and silt, and sweeps to the sea,
So storming, glorious Ajax ranged o'er the plain
Slaying horses and men. But Hector as yet
Knew not of him, for he fought on the left of the field
By the banks of the river Scamander, where chiefly there fell
The heads of men, and a great unquenchable cry
Round mighty Nestor and brave Idomeneus rose.
Now Hector among them was wreaking terrible death,
By his spear and his horsemanship, on the young men of arms,
But never the noble Achaeans had yielded their ground
If crafty Paris, that bright-hair'd Helen had wed,
Had stay'd not from valorous deeds a shepherd of men,
When with three-barb'd shaft Macháon's shoulder he pierc'd.

Then were the Argives, tho' breathing courage, afraid
Lest the battle should turn and Machaon a prisoner be,
And at once Idomeneus godlike Nestor address'd:
'Son of Neleus, Achaea's glory and pride,
Quick, thy chariot! take Machaon with thee
And drive full speed till thou come to the Danaan ships,
For a leech in an army is many a warrior worth
To cut out arrows and healing simples to smear.'
He spake, and the knight, Gerenian Nestor, obey'd
And straightway mounted his car, and Machaon with him,
Son of the blameless leech Asclepius, went;
And he lash'd the horses, and nothing loath did they fly
To the hollow ships, for there would they willingly be.

But the flight of the Trojans was mark'd by Kebriones,
Hector's charioteer, who a word to him spake:
'Hector, here we contend with the Danaan host
On the edge of tumultuous battle, but yonder our folk
Are driv'n by the foe in confusion, horses and men,
And Ajax it is that drives them; well do I know him
By the broad shield on his shoulders. Thither let us
Our chariot turn, where chiefly the footmen and horse
Dashing forward in strife and slaying each other
Fight, and a cry unquenchable rises to heaven.'
So Kebriones; and the fair-maned horses he plied
With his crackling whip, and they, well heeding the lash,
Right quickly 'mong Danaans and Trojans the chariot brought
Trampling the corpses and shields, and the axle beneath
Was spatter'd with gore, and the rails on the chariot-side
With blood-drops were dabbled, flung by the stallions' hooves
And the tires of the wheels. And Hector charg'd through the
press

Eager to break it; an evil din did he bring
For the Danaan men, and little he rested his spear,
Ranging among the nameless, the ranks of the herd,
With spear and sword and with mighty fragments of stone,
But with great Telamonian Ajax battle he shunn'd.

Now Zeus from his high seat panic in Ajax awoke
That he stood in amaze, and, his broad shield flinging behind,
Shrank back to the throng, like a wild beast peering about
And turning this way and that, as he shifted his feet.
As when hounds and countrymen, guarding the fold of their
kine

In the midst of a farmstead, a ravening lion repel
And suffer him not the fatling to take of the herd,

Nightlong watching; the lion, lusting for blood,
Makes onset yet nothing he gets, so thickly the darts,
Hurl'd by venturous hands, fly whizzing about
With blazing brands that for all his fury he dreads,
And at dawn he sulkily goes, sore vex'd in his heart,
E'en so did Ajax depart, sore vex'd in his heart
Right loath, for greatly he fear'd for the Danaan ships.
As a sluggish ass by a roadside enters a field
O'erpowering boys, tho' they break their cudgels on him,
And the lush grass greedily crops while they with their sticks
Belabour his ribs, tho' feeble and childish their strength,
Yet they drive him forth for their pains, having eaten his fill,
E'en so did the Trojans, with allies muster'd from far,
Buffet their enemy, great Telamonian Ajax,
Dinting his shield with their darts continually.
But Ajax at whiles his impetuous valour recall'd
Turning to face them, and kept the battalions off
Of the horse-taming Trojans, at whiles he would turn and retire:
So foil'd he them all from making their way to the ships,
Fighting his single battle twist foemen and friends
When he stood at bay, while the spears from venturous hands
Sometimes stuck in his shield, fulfilling their flight,
But some half-way, tho' eager to feed on his flesh,
Stood fast in the ground and never their target could reach.

But Euaemon's glorious son, Eurýpylus, mark'd
How mighty Ajax was vex'd by the showers of darts
And ran to stand at his side, and smote with his spear
Phausius' son Apisáon, shepherd of men,
In the liver beneath the midriff, and loosen'd his knees,
Then sprang upon him and stripp'd from his shoulders the arms.
But when godlike Paris beheld him stripping the arms
From fall'n Apisaon, he straightway sighted his bow
And drew, and the arrow pierc'd Eurypylus' thigh,
But the reed-shaft snapp'd and his thigh was numb'd with the
pain

And he hid in the throng of his friends avoiding his fate
And utter'd a piercing shout to the Danaan men:
'Friends, captains and counsellors all that in Argos have power,
Rally and stand, and avert the pitiless day
From Ajax vex'd by the darts, for from thunderous war
Methinks he cannot escape; nay, stand ye at bay
Defending the mighty Ajax, Telamon's son.'
So cried Eurypylus wounded, and straightway they stood
Close together beside him, sloping their shields

And levelling spears, and Ajax towards them retir'd
But turn'd and stood when the throng of his comrades he
reach'd.

So fought they like blazing fire; but out of the fight,
Bathed in their sweat, the mares of Nestor had brought:
Nestor himself and Machaon, shepherd of men;
And swift-foot Achilles saw, and of Nestor was 'ware,
As he stood by the stem of his great ship watching the toil,
The arduous toil, and the woeful rout of the fight.
And straightway he call'd from the ship and his comrade
address'd,

And Patroclus, splendid as Ares, hasten'd to go
When he heard from the hut—the beginning of evil for him.
And Menoetius' valiant son spake first to his chief:
'Why call'st thou, Achilles, what need is this that thou hast?'
And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Noble son of Menoetius, dear to my heart,
Now methinks the Achaeans will be at my feet
Imploring, for need is upon them not to be borne.
Go then, darling of Zeus, and of Nestor inquire
What man is this he is bringing wounded away:
Of a truth, from behind most like Machaon he was
Asclepius' son, but I saw not the eyes of the man
For the mares flash'd by in a twinkling, straining for home.'
He spake, and Patroclus his well-lov'd comrade obey'd
And, running, skirted the huts by the Danaan ships,
But those in the car, when Nestor's hut they had reach'd,
Drew rein and alighted at once on the bounteous earth,
And the squire Eurymedon loos'd the team from the yoke.

Then first the sweat from their tunics each of them dried,
Standing before the breeze on the strand of the sea;
And thereafter they enter'd the hut and sat them on chairs,
And the fair-hair'd maid Hecaméda mix'd them a drink,
Arsinōus' daughter, whom Nestor in Tenedos won
The day that Achilles sack'd it, reserv'd from the spoil
For Nestor alone, in counsel their chiefest of men.
First a fair-wrought table she drew to their side,
Well-polish'd, with cyanus feet, and on it she laid
A brazen saucer with onion relish therein
And yellow honey and barley's nourishing grain
And beside it a splendid goblet studded with gold
That Nestor had brought from home: four handles it had
Equally spaced, two golden doves upon each,
Feeding, and underneath two stands for the cup:

Scarce could another have mov'd from the table the cup
When fill'd to the brim, but Nestor could lift it with ease.
In this did the noble damsel mix them a mess
Of Pramnian wine, and goats' cheese grated therein
With a grater of bronze and sprinkled barley in it,
And bade them drink when the mess was ready for them.
But when they had drunk and their parching thirst was reliev'd,
Then sought they pleasure in talk, discoursing together,
When lo! like a God Patroclus appear'd at the door,
And the old man seeing him rose from his well-polish'd chair
And led him in by the hand and set him a seat;
But Patroclus would have refus'd and a word to him spake:
'No time for sitting is this, O foster'd of Zeus;
A stern master and prone to anger is he
That sent me to ask of the wounded man in thy car;
But I see for myself that the leech Machaon it is
And now with the tidings will straight to Achilles return.
Well thou knowest how much is he to be fear'd,
How lightly even a blameless man he can blame.'

And the knight, Gerenian Nestor, answer'd and said:
'How can Achilles be griev'd for the sons of Achaea
Or for those that are wounded in fight, when nothing he knows
Of the woe that has fallen on us, for all of our best
At the ships are lying, wounded with arrow or spear?
Pierc'd with an arrow the stalwart Diomed is,
And stricken by spear are Odysseus and King Agamemnon,
And this other now have I carried out of the fight
With an arrow-wound; but Achilles, brave tho' he be,
For the Danaans cares not nor pities their troubles at all.
Why waits he? To see our swift-going ships on the shore
Burnt in spite of our bravest by ravening fire
And ourselves dying in heaps? No longer, alas!
My limbs are supple, my force unspent, as of old.
Would I were young and my strength were stedfast in me
As once when our folk with the Elian men were at feud
For lifting our herds, and I slew Hyperochus' son,
High-born Itymones, an Elian lord.
I was taking reprisal, and he, defending his kine,
Was struck in the front of the fight by a spear from my hand
And wounded to death, and in panic the countrymen fled,
And booty exceeding great we drove from the plain,
Fifty droves of the kine and as many of sheep,
And of swine and of bleating goats as many again,
And chestnut horses a hundred and fifty together,

All of them mares, and many with foals at their feet;
All these we drove in the night to the Pylian keep
Of my father Neleus, and hé rejoic'd in his heart
Because I had fortun'd well, tho' a novice in arms.
But at dawning of day the shrill-voic'd heralds proclaim'd
A muster of all that had debts on the Elian folk,
And the Pylian elders assembled and portion'd the spoil,
For many there were that had debts from Elis to claim.
A little people were we and sorely oppress'd,
For in former years had the mighty Hercules come
And dealt with us hard and massacred all of our best;
For twelve had we been, we sons of Neleus, at first,
And I was alone of them left, for the others had fall'n,
And then the mail-clad Epeians, swollen with pride,
Heap'd on us insults, devising violent deeds.

'So Neleus a drove of the kine and a great flock of sheep,
Three hundred head, with their herdsman, chose from the spoil,
For great was the debt that in Elis was owing to him—
Four horses of racing breed and their chariot too
That had gone on a day to the games for a tripod to run,
When Augeas, ruler of men, had seiz'd them by force
And dismiss'd their driver bewailing the loss of his team.
Therefore did Neleus, wroth at their speeches and deeds,
Choose countless spoil for himself, and the rest to his folk
He gave to divide that none be depriv'd of his share.
While thus we were busy and sacrifice made to the Gods
At every shrine, on the third day the Elian folk
Muster'd and march'd full force, both horsemen and foot,
And among them the twin Molíones arm'd for the fray,
Being yet but lads, naught knowing of furious war.
There lies a citadel steep, Thryöessa its name,
By Alphéus afar, the last in our sandy domain,
Round which they had camp'd, being eager to raze it to ground;
But soon as the plain they had travers'd, Athena to us
Came speeding by night from Olympus, bidding us arm,
And marshall'd us nothing loath in the Pylian town,
Burning for war; now Neleus suffer'd me not
To arm for the fight but had hidden my horses away,
For he deem'd me ignorant yet of the business of war;
Yet even so, tho' on foot, 'mong the horsemen I shone
Thanks to Athena, for thus she directed the fight.
A river there is, Minyéus, that falls to the sea
Hard by Aréne, and there did the Pylian horse
Wait for the dawn and the footmen that stream'd o'er the plain;

Thence marching with speed, the whole host, arm'd for the fight,

By noon at the sacred stream, Alpheus, arriv'd,
And there, having sacrific'd goodly victims to Zeus,
A bull to the God of the river, a bull to Poseidon,
And an unyok'd heifer to grey-ey'd Athena the Maid,
In the evening by squadron and phalanx our supper we took
And slept in our places, every man in his arms,
On the banks of the river: and meanwhile the Elian lords
Lay round the citadel, eager to raze it to ground.
But ere then was shown them a mighty achievement of arms,
For soon as the gleaming Sun-god rose o'er the earth
We gave them battle, praying to Zeus and Athena,
And I of the Pylian men, when battle was join'd,
Was the first his foeman to slay and a chariot win:
Mulius, Augeas' son by marriage, was he,
Having wedded his eldest child, Agamede the fair,
Who knew all med'cinal herbs that the wide earth bears.
Him as he charged did I strike with my bronze-headed spear,
And he fell in the dust, but I on his chariot leapt
And thenceforth fought in the van; but the Elian host
Fled this way and that when they saw their captain of horse
Fall'n from his car, for in fight their chiefest was he,
And on them I sprang like a black storm, beating them down,
And fifty chariots took and by each on the ground
Left two men biting the dust 'neath my conquering spear.
And now had I also the twin Moliones slain,
But their father Poseidon, the Earth-shaker, came to their help
And sav'd them out of the battle and hid them in mist.
There did Zeus to the Pylians victory give,
And long we follow'd, far through the limitless plain,
Slaying the foe as we rode and collecting their arms,
Till beside Buprasion's cornlands our horses we check'd
Beneath the Olenian rock and the hill that they call
Alisian: there did Athena stay the pursuit
And there my last did I slay, by Búprasion,
And all, as homeward to Pylos their horses they drove,
To Zeus gave praise of the Gods and to Nestor of men.
So fought I in those great days. But Achilles would reap
The meed of his valour alone; yet surely, methinks,
Too late will he weep when ruin upon us is come.
Dear youth! remember, Menoetius gave thee commands
That day when he sent thee from home, with Atrides to serve,
For godlike Odysseus and I were both in the house

And heard all clearly, ev'n as he said it to thee.
For we to the well-built halls of Peleus had come
Assembling the host through Achaea's bounteous land
And ev'n as we came we found thy father within
And thee, and Achilles beside thee; but Peleus himself
Was burning an ox's thighbones to Zeus of the Storm
In his courtyard-close and handled a chalice of gold
As he pour'd the bright-hearted wine on the sacrifice-meats.
Ye two with the beef were busy when we at the door
Suddenly show'd, and Achilles leapt in amaze
And led us in by the hand and gave us a seat,
And all that is due to a guest before us he laid;
But when we had taken our pleasure of meat and of drink,
I spoke for us both and bade you accompany us:
Right eager were ye, and the elders full of advice,
For first did Peleus enjoin on Achilles his son
Ever in fight to be first and his fellows excel,
But Menoetius gave to his son another command:
"My son, in lineage Achilles is higher than thou,
And, tho' thóu art older, in strength he is better by far;
Yet speak to him words of wisdom and show him the right
And he, if gentle thy tone, for his good will obey."
So said he, but thou hast forgotten. Yet, late tho' it be,
Speak to Achilles, and he perchance will obey;
Who knows whether so, God helping, his heart thou mayst move
With persuasion, for good is persuasive speech from a friend?
But if, in his heart, some evil presage he shun
And his lady mother have told him a warning from Zeus,
Yet thee he may send and the rest of the Myrmidon men
If haply a light thou mayst be to the Danaan host.
Let him lend thee his goodly armour to wear in the field
That the Trojans mistake thee and hold them from fighting
aloof

And the warlike sons of Achaea a breathing-time win:
One brief hour is enough men's strength to renew,
And ye, unwearied, the wearied Trojans could drive
Back to the city, away from the ships and the camp.'

So he to Patroclus and stirr'd the spirit in him,
And Patroclus started to run to Achilles again:
But when to the ships and the huts of godlike Odysseus
In his running he came, to the place of assembly and law
In the midst of the line, where the altars of sacrifice were,
There met him the son of Euaemon, Eurypylos,
Of the seed of Zeus, as out of the battle he limp'd

With the arrow stuck in his thigh; his head and his chest
 Were streaming with anguish'd sweat, and the darkening blood
 Well'd from his wound, tho' steadfast still was his mind.
 And Menoetius' valiant son had pity on him
 And with sorrowful voice in winged words to him spake:
 'Ah, pitiable! ye Danaan captains and peers,
 Who surely are fated, far from your country and friends,
 With your white fat the hounds of Troyland to glut!
 But tell me this, Eurypylus foster'd of Zeus,
 Whether still the Achaeans can mighty Hector restrain
 Or must straightway perish 'neath Hector's conquering spear?'
 And him did the strick'n Eurypylus answer again:
 'No more, O heav'n-born Patroclus, any defence
 Will there be for the sons of Achaea, but soon we shall die,
 For verily all that were once our bravest and best
 By the ships are lying, wounded with arrow or spear
 At the hands of the Trojans, whose strength still waxes amain.
 Yet me canst thou succour; take me at once to my ship
 And cut out this barb and the dark blood wash from my wound
 With soft warm water and soothing drugs on it smear,
 The potent herbs thou hast learnt from Achilles, they say,
 Whose master was Chiron, the justest Centaur of all.
 Two leeches, thou knowest, we have in the Danaan host,
 But the one, Machaon, himself has need of a leech
 Where wounded he lies in the huts, and the other of them,
 Podalírius, still on the plain fierce battle abides.'
 And Menoetius' valiant son address'd him again:
 'Alack the day! Eurypylus, what shall we do?
 I carry a message to wise-hearted Pelëides
 From Achaea's warden, the old Gerenian knight,
 Yet even so will I fail thee not in thy need.'
 So spake he and round the waist Eurypylus clasp'd
 And led to his hut, and his squire spread skins on the ground,
 Where, stretching him out, Patroclus cut from his thigh
 The keen-barb'd shaft and the dark blood wash'd from his
 wound
 With soft warm water, and bruise'd a root in his hand,
 Bitter and deadening pain, and smear'd it and eas'd
 All pangs; and the wound grew dry and stanch'd was the blood.

The Trojans succeed in breaking down the Achaean wall.

So in the hut the son of Menoetius heal'd
 Eurypylus wounded, but still those others afield,
 Achaeans and horse-training Trojans, confusedly fought.
 Yet not for long were the trench and the wide wall above
 To protect the Achaeans, the shield they had made for their
 ships,
 Yet sacrificed not to the Gods the hecatombs due
 To make it a surer defence for the camp and the ships
 And the booty within. Nay, in spite of the Gods was it built
 That watch from above, and therefore not long it endured.
 While Hector yet lived and Achilles cherished his wrath
 And still unsack'd was the city of Priam the King,
 So long did the great wall of the Argives abide;
 But when once the bravest and best of the Trojans had died
 And many a Danaan also, tho' many were left,
 And the city of Priam in the tenth year had been sack'd
 And the Argives had gone to their own dear country again.
 Then counsell'd between them Poseidon and Phoebus Apollo
 To war it away, and they turn'd the rivers on it,
 All that from Ida's hills flow down to the sea,
 Rhesus and Heptaporus, Caresus and Rhodius,
 Aesapus, Granicus, and Simois' fair-flowing stream,
 And mighty Scamander whereby men's helmets and shields
 And the generation of heroes had fall'n in the dust.
 All their mouths did Apollo turn on the wall
 For nine long days, and Zeus continually
 Rain'd, the quicker to mingle the wall with the sea,
 And chiefly Poseidon, the Earth-shaker, trident in hand,
 Loosen'd the beams and the stones, that the Argives had laid
 With labour and sweat, and scatter'd them into the waves
 And made all smooth by the strong-flowing Hellespont stream
 And cover'd with sand the great sea-beaches again
 And, the wall being quite blotted out, the rivers he turn'd
 Back to their beds, and their fair waters flowed as before.
 Such ruin Poseidon and Phoebus were destin'd to wreak,
 But now blaz'd furious war round the well-built wall
 And noise of battle, and loud the beams of the towers

Rang with the blows, and under the scourging of Zeus
The Argives were driv'n and subdued and penn'd by the ships
In fear of Hector, that mighty master of rout,
For still like a whirlwind rag'd he, fierce as before.
As when at a hunt a lion or furious boar
Turns on hunters and men in the strength of his rage
And the men like a tower array them in face of the beast
And stand up against him and thickly their javelins of bronze
Hurl from their hands, but he in his valiant heart
Quails not nor fears, and courage itself is his bane,
And often he wheels him about their ranks to assail
And whenso he charges, their ranks are broken in flight
E'en so wheel'd Hector amidst the mellay of men
And his comrades urg'd o'er the trench. But vainly he urged
For the swift-footed horses refused where shrilly they neigh'd
On the sheer edge of the ditch, dismay'd at its mouth,
Wide-gaping, not easy to cross nor yet to o'erleap
For on either side of it banks precipitous rose
O'er all its length, and above it was planted with stakes
Sharp-pointed and stout that the sons of Achaea had set
'Gainst the onset of hostile foemen a bulwark to be.
Not lightly a fair-wheel'd chariot drawn by a horse
Might enter therein, but the footmen were eager to try.

And then Polydamas valiant Hector address'd:
'Hector and all ye others, captains and chiefs,
'Tis madness to drive our horses over the ditch;
Hard indeed were the crossing because of the stakes,
Close-set, standing therein and beyond them the wall.
No chariot or horse can go down thither or fight
For scant is the room and methinks we can come but to grief.
If Zeus loud-thundering wishes to Danaans ill
And means to destroy them wholly and Troy to befriend,
And indeed 'tis my dearest wish that soon it may be
That the Argives shall perish and leave not so much as a name,
Well!—but how if they rally and drive us again
From the ships and we be entangled deep in the trench?
Methinks not a man will escape the tidings to bear
Back to the city, if once they rally and fight.
But come now, hear ye my bidding and, hearing, obey;
Let our squires the chariots hold on the edge of the dyke
And ourselves in our armour will follow Hector on foot
And as footmen fight; and I deem that the Danaans will yield
If indeed the bands of destruction upon them are knit.'
Such was Polydamas' counsel and Hector it pleas'd,

And straightway he leapt from his chariot, arm'd, to the ground;

Nor yet did the other Trojans their chariots keep
But all of them leapt to the ground, when Hector they saw,
And each of them gave in charge to his charioteer
His horses to range them in order hard by the trench.

Then, parting, they order'd themselves in companies five
And each of the companies follow'd its leader on foot;
The first under Hector and stout Polydamas march'd,
These were the most and the bravest, and keenest of all
To break through the wall and fight by the sea-going ships,
And with them was Kebriones, for Hector had left
A weaker warrior than he his chariot to tend.

The second by Paris, Agenor, and Alcathous
Was led, and the third by godlike Deiphobus
And Helenus, sons of Priam, but Hyrtacus' son,
Asius, shared their command, whom his tall sorrel steed
Had brought from Arisbe by Selleis' fair-flowing stream.
Anchises' son, Aeneas, commanded the fourth

With the sons of Antenor, the princely Archelochus
And Achamas, skill'd in every movement of war.

And, last, Sarpedon led the allies of Troy
And chose for his captains Glaucus and Asteropaeus
For these were the chiefs that he deem'd the bravest and best
Next after himself; for he was the first of them all.

And the companies order'd their ranks, close locking their
shields,

And straight on the Danaans march'd, for high was their hope
To break their resistance and fall on the black-hull'd ships.

Now all the rest of the Trojans and allies of Troy
The counsel obey'd of the blameless Polydamas,
But Asius, son of Hyrtacus, shepherd of men,
Will'd not to leave his horses and charioteer
But forward drove to assail the swift-going ships.
Fond man! for the fates of death he could nowise avoid
Nor in horses and chariot glorying ever return
From the hollow ships to windy Ilion's walls;
Ere that must infamous death overshadow his eyes
By the spear of Idomeneus, Deucalion's son,
For he drove to the left of the ships where the Argives were
wont

To return from the plain where with horses and chariot they
came.

There drove he his chariot now nor found he the doors

Shut on the gates nor the great bar set in its place
But men were holding them open if haply they might
Some fugitive save from the plain as he fled to the ships.
Straight onward he held and his company follow'd behind
With shrill cries, for the hope was high in their breasts
To break through the gateway and fall on the black-hull'd ships,
Fools! for two of the bravest they found in the gate,
The high-hearted sons of the Lapithae, men of the spear,
Stout Polypoetes, the son of Pirithöus,
And Leontes, the peer of manslaying Ares in fight,
There stood they in front of the gate, two brothers in arms,
Like two great oaks high-crested that stand on the hills
All their days enduring the wind and the rain
And reaching their great roots outward, moveless and firm;
E'en so these warriors, trusting the strength of their hands,
The onset of Asius bode nor bethought them of flight.

Now while yet the Trojans had reached not the well-built wall

But came on with clamour, holding their oxhides on high,
Round Asius and Iamenus and goodly Orestes
And Adamas, Asius' son, and Thoön and Oenomaus,
So long did the Lapithae stand on the well-built wall
Urging the well-greav'd Achaeans to fight for the ships,
But soon as they saw them assailing the wall and the gate
And the Danaans stricken with panic turning to flee,
Then rush'd they forth on the foe in front of the gate
Like boars of the wild that assail'd in their lair on the hills
The noisy rabble withstand of hunters and dogs
And then with a sidelong rush the underwood break,
Cutting it down at the root, and the clashing of tusks
Grows loud till some hunter has spear'd them and reft them of life;
E'en so on the breasts of those two did the glittering bronze
Clash 'neath the hail of the missiles, so fiercely they fought,
Trusting the fighters above and the strength of their hands.
For the Danaans that stood on the well-built towers of the wall
Defending themselves and the camp and the swift-going ships
Were fighting with stones; like snowflakes earthward they fell
Whirl'd by the wintry blast that drives through the air
The black tempest to lie on the bounteous earth;
So thick fell the sleet, from Achaeans and Trojans alike,
Of missiles, and harsh rang the helmets under the blows
And the high-boss'd shields as the great stones smote upon them.
Then verily Asius, son of Hyrtacus, groan'd,
And, smiting his thighs, in indignation he spake:

'O Zeus, so thou too art one that lovest a lie!
For never I deem'd that the hero sons of Achaea
Could withstand our fiery strength and invincible hands,
But lo!— like the nimble bees or the flickering wasps
That build by some rocky pathway their dwelling on earth
And leave not their hollow fortress but steadfast abide
And hold the hunters at bay for the sake of their young,
So these, though two men only, will yield not their ground,
Where they stand in the gate, till either they slay or be slain.'

So spake he in anger, but Zeus persuaded he not
For his will was steadfast to give to Hector renown.
But others were fighting about the rest of the gates,
And, God though I were, it would task me to tell of it all,
For around the wall of stone on every side
Rose up the terrible fire—the sons of Achaea,
Pressed as they were, were forced to defend their ships;
And all of the Gods who in battle the Danaans help'd
Were griev'd at heart; and in strife the Lapithae clash'd.
Then stout Polypoetes, son of Pirithöus,
Damasus smote with a spear through his cheekpiece of bronze
And the brazen rim of the helmet stay'd not the point
But it pass'd through helmet and bone, and the brain of the men
Was shatter'd and spilt; and so was his eagerness stay'd;
And thereafter Pylon and Oemenus likewise he slew.
And Leontes, scion of Ares, Hippomachus smote,
Antimachus' son, and pierc'd through his glittering belt;
Then drew he straightway his sharp-edg'd sword from the sheath
And first Antiphates smote in the midst of the throng
In close fight, that he fell on his back to the ground.
Then Menon and Iamenus and goodly Orestes
Each in turn did he lay on the bounteous earth.
But while these were stripping the gleaming arms from the dead,
They that with Hector and stout Polydamas march'd,
The best and the most in number and keenest of all
To break through the wall and burn the well-timber'd ships,
These on the brink of the trench still wavering stood;
For ev'n as they set them to cross, an omen appear'd,
A high-flying eagle skirting their ranks on the left,
That bore in his talons an adder, blood-red and huge,
Still struggling, for joy of battle it had not forgot
But writhing backward it struck the neck of the bird
And stung him, and he in his anguish cast it from him
Down to the earth, and it dropped in the midst of the throng;
And the bird with a piercing cry flew away down the wind.

And the Trojans shudder'd to see the bright-spotted thing
Lying in their midst, a portent from all-ruling Zeus,
And then Polydamas spake to Hector a word:
' 'Tis ever thy way, O Hector, my words to rebuke
E'en though my counsel be good; 'tis unseemly forsooth
That a man of the people cross thy purpose at all
In counsel or war, but thy power must ever increase.
Yet now as before will I speak as seems to me best;
Advance we no further to fight with the foe for the ships,
For the end thereof is as sure as 'tis certainly sure
That the omen appear'd to us just as we purpos'd to cross,
A high-flying eagle skirting our ranks on the left
That bore in his talons an adder, blood-red and huge
Still living, yet dropp'd him to earth as he came to his nest
And achiev'd not his end to carry him home to his young.
So we, though the gates and the wall of the Argives we break
With all this our strength and drive the Achaeans in rout,
Shall retreat in disorder and go back the way that we came
And many a man shall we leave that the sons of Achaea
Have slain with spear or with sword defending their ships;
So would some augur interpret, one that had skill
In reading of omens and whom the people obey.'

And bright-plum'd Hector, louting upon him, replied:
'This saying of thine, Polydamas, pleases me not,
For many a better rede dost thou know in thy heart
But if truly thou speakest in earnest the thing thou hast said
Then must the Gods themselves thy wits have destroy'd;
For the counsel of thundering Zeus thou bidd'st me forget,
All that he promis'd and seal'd with a nod of his brows,
And bidd'st me obey the long-wing'd fowls of the air;
But them do I heed not or trust; no omens are they
Whether they fly to the right towards the dawn and the sun
Or leftward and seek the misty darkness of night.
One omen ever is best, for our country to fight.
As for thee, why fearest thou war or wounding or death?
Tho' all we others be slain and lie in the dust
By the Danaan ships, yet thou hast no reason to fear
Having no heart for the battle nor staying therein.
But if thou withhold thee from fight or another persuade
With thy idle words to retreat, then straightway shalt thou
By this spear of mine be smitten and forfeit thy life.'
So spake he and led the way and they follow'd him close
With a wondrous din, and Zeus that the thunderbolt wields
A blast of wind from the hills of Ida arous'd,

That blew the dust towards the ships, and the Danaans' hearts
Made faint, but to Hector and Troy the glory he gave.
Then trusting the sign from the God and the strength of their
hands

They set on the mighty wall and to break it essay'd,
Dragging the battlement down and the breastwork therewith
And prising the buttresses up that deep in the earth
The Achaeans had sunk to stand as a prop to the towers;
These they o'erturn'd and had hoped to have broken the wall
But still the Danaans flagg'd not nor yielded their ground
But, with hides of oxen closing the rampart again,
They cast at the foe as he came up under the wall.

Now both the Ajaxes rang'd the parapets' length
Arousing the courage of all and bidding them stand,
One man with honey'd words and another with hard
Rebuking whomso they saw giving ground from the fight:
'Friends, that are leaders of men or middling in rank
Or the commoner sort, for nowise equal in war
Are all in one army, now is there work for you all,
And well ye know it yourselves. Let none having heard
The voice of the chider turn and retire to the ships
But set ye your faces, cheering each other with words,
If haply the Lord of lightning, Olympian Zeus,
Grant us to stay the assailant and chase him to Troy.'
So spake they and call'd to the onset and battle awoke
And even as flakes of snow fall thick through the air
On a day in winter when Zeus, the Lord of the storm,
Is astir and his white arrows to mortals reveals
And lulls all the winds and snows continually
Till he cover the mountain crests and the promontories
And the grassy plains and the rich tillage of men
And every haven and shore has its mantle of snow
And only the wave repels it, but all other things
Are swathed by the power of the hand of all-ruling Zeus,
So thick did the stones of the fighters fly through the air,
These from the Trojans and these from the Danaan host,
As they cast at each other, and loud rose the din from the wall.
Yet never had glorious Hector and those in his train
Broken the well-locking gate or the bar of the gate
Had not far-seeing Zeus his son Sarpedon arousd
Against the foe, as a lion against the kine,
And straightway, holding before him the orb of his shield,
Fair-fashion'd of hammer'd bronze, that the bronze-smith had
wrought

And within it many a layer of oxhide had pegg'd
All round the circle of bronze with rivets of gold—
This holding before him and mightily shaking his spears
He sped on his way like a mountain-lion that long
Has hunger'd for meat and his proud heart bids him assail
The pasturing sheep or even their well-built fold,
Yea, ev'n if he find by the fold the shepherds on guard
Defending their sheep in their pen with watchdogs and spears,
Yet has he no mind unappeas'd to be driven from it
But either he leaps on a sheep to seize it perforce
Or himself in the front of the fray is stricken to death;
E'en so by the pride of his heart Sarpedon was driven
To rush on the wall and break the battlements down
And straightway spake he to Glaucus, Hippolochus' son:
'Glaucus, why have we two been honour'd the most
With seats at the board and messes and full-brimming cups
In Lycia and all men revere us even as Gods?
And why by the banks of Xanthus enjoy we demesnes
Fair holdings of orchard-land and wheat-bearing fields?
Therefore behoved us now in the front of the fight
'Mong the Lycians to stand and fiery battle engage
That thus to his neighbours some corsleted Lycian may say:
"Truly our princes are no inglorious men
That in Lycia rule and eat of the fattest of sheep
And drink the choicest of wine, but prowess and strength
Is theirs above all, for they fight in the front of our line."
Ah! friend, if, once escaped from this battle alive
We two might ageless and deathless for ever become,
Then neither myself would I fight in the front of the fray
Nor send thee into the battle that glorifies men;
But, seeing ten thousand fates on every side
Beset us that no man on earth can escape or avoid,
On! whether we win the glory or yield it to them.'

So spake he and Glaucus obey'd and turn'd not aside,
And they went straight forward leading the Lycian host.
And Menestheus the son of Peteos shudder'd to see
For on him they were marching, bringing ruin with them;
And he scann'd the Danaan line if perchance he might find
One of the chieftains to ward destruction from him,
And he mark'd the Ajaxes standing, insatiate of war,
And Teucer beside them newly come from his hut
And he shouted, but shouted in vain, so great was the din
For the noise of the battle arose to the heaven above,
The clangour of oxhide shields and helmets of bronze

And of every gate, for the Trojans were standing by each
Striving to batter them down and enter by force.
And swiftly the herald Thoötes to Ajax he sent:
'Run, Thoötes, and summon Ajax with speed,
Or rather the Ajaxes both, for that were the best,
For quickly will sheer destruction be wrought on us here.
The storm of the Lycian captains is heavy on us
And they rage in the violent mellay, as ever of old;
But if for the Ajaxes also the stress is arisen
Yet at least bring great Telamonian Ajax alone
And let Teucer, that well-skill'd Bowman, follow with him.'
He spake and the herald heard him and straightway obey'd
And started and ran by the wall of the bronze-mail'd Achaeans
And stood by the Ajaxes both and a word to them spake:
'Ye Ajaxes, leaders of old of the bronze-mail'd Achaeans,
The son of heav'n—nurtur'd Peteos bids you to come
And ev'n for a little while their labour partake.
Both would he rather should come, for that were the best,
For quickly will sheer destruction be wrought upon them.
The storm of the Lycian captains is heavy on them
And they rage in the violent mellay, as ever of old;
But if for you also the stress and the toil are arisen,
Let great Telamonian Ajax come by himself
And let Teucer that well-skill'd Bowman follow with him.'

So spake he and great Telamonian Ajax obey'd
And in winged words the son of Oileus address'd:
'Ajax, do thou and stout Lycomedes remain
And stand by the Danaans and urge them to fight to the last
And I will go to Menestheus his labour to share
And to you will quickly return, having succour'd their need.'
So spake Telamonian Ajax and went on his way,
And Teucer his brother, the Bowman, follow'd him close,
And Pandion his squire bare Teucer's crescented bow.
And when to the tower of noble Menestheus they came
Along the rampart, his men sore harass'd they found
And the foe like a black storm already scaling the wall,
The stalwart captains and chiefs of the Lycian host;
These clasp'd they together in fight and the war-cry arose.
And first Telamonian Ajax a Lycian man,
Sarpedon's comrade, great-hearted Epicles slew
With a jagged stone that uppermost lay of a heap
Behind the breastwork; not lightly could anyone hold
Of the men of to-day, how lusty soever and strong,
So huge a stone in his hands, but he cast it with ease,

And it shatter'd the crested helmet and utterly brake
The bones of his head and down from the tower of the wall
Like a diver he plunged and the spirit fled from his bones;
And Teucer at Glaucus aim'd, Hippolochus' son,
Seeing his arm expos'd as the breastwork he clomb
And the shaft pierc'd and his joy in battle was gone
And he secretly leapt from the wall lest one of the foe
Behold him smitten and boast and mock at his wound.
But when Sarpedon was ware that Glaucus was gone
Sorely he griev'd yet forgot not his joy in the fight
And Thestor's son Alcmaon he smote with the spear
And withdrew it again and Alcmaon following the spear
Fell prone and his bronze-figured armour clang'd as he fell,
And then Sarpedon the battlement seiz'd in his hands
And pull'd and it all gave way and the earthwork beneath
Stood bare and open'd a pathway for many to cross.
But him, Sarpedon, Ajax and Teucer assail'd;
And Teucer the gleaming strap of his sheltering shield
Smote with an arrow, but Zeus still warded his son
From the fates of death lest he fall by the sterns of the ships;
And Ajax smote on his shield but the point of the spear
Pass'd not through, tho' it made him reel in his charge,
And he gave ground a little before him yet thought not a whit
Of retreat from the wall for his heart on glory was set,
And he call'd to the godlike Lycians with far-reaching cry:
'Ye Lycians, why slacken ye thus and your virtue forget?
'Tis hard for me, strong tho' I be, to break down the wall
Unaided, alone, and open a path to the ships;
Come, follow me close, for the more the better the work.'

He spake and the Lycians, fearing their chieftain's rebuke,
The harder around their prince press'd on to the fray.
And the Argives also their phalanxes strengthen'd and dress'd
Along the rampart and great was the stress of the fight
For neither the stalwart Lycians could break through the wall
Of the Danaan host and open a way to the ships
Nor yet could the Danaan spearmen the Lycians drive
Back from the wall, when once they were nigh unto it.
But even as two men about their boundaries strive
In a common field with the measuring-rods in their hands
And in narrow space for a fair division contend,
So these did the breastwork divide and across it they smote
The rounded shields of each other covering their breasts,
Ay, many an oxhide shield and fluttering targe.
And many a man by the spear got wounds in his flesh,

Some in the back when they turn'd them round in the fight,
And some in the breast through the very buckler itself,
And towers and battlements everywhere swam with the blood
Shed by them both, Achaeans and Trojans alike.
Yet for all that the Trojans put not the Argives to rout,
But even as some poor workwoman poises the scales
Till she balance her portion of wool with the weight in the pan
To win for her children's bread a pittance of wage,
So evenly pois'd was the battle on this side and that
Till the moment when Zeus to Hector gave the renown
And the son of Priam the Danaan wall overleapt
Who now to his Trojans shouted with far-reaching cry:
'Rise, ye horse-taming Trojans, and break through the wall,
Then cast on the ships of the Danaans fierce-blazing fire.'

So spake he urging them on and they heard with their ears
And rush'd on the wall in a pack and, javelin in hand,
Set foot on the piers of a tower and scaled it thereby;
But Hector seiz'd on a stone that lay by the gates,
Enormous, thick at the base, sharp-pointed above,
A stone such as no two men of the people to-day,
Even the strongest, could easily move from the ground
And heave on a wain, but he wielded it lightly alone
For the son of Cronos had made it light to his hands.
As a shepherd in one hand takes the fleece of a ram
And lifts it with ease and 'tis little burden to him,
So easily Hector lifted and carried the stone
To the door that guarded the gate, close-fitting and strong,
Twin doors, and two were the bars that lock'd them within
O'erlapping each other and one bolt fasten'd them both;
And he stood and planted himself and smote in their midst
With legs well apart that his blow might lack not of strength
And brake both hinges at once, and the stone by its weight
Fell inwards and loud rang the gates and the well-fitted bars
Gave way and the leaves of the door burst this way and that
With the dint of the stone; and glorious Hector at once
Leapt in, his face as the night, and the bronze was aflame
Of the wondrous mail that about his body was cloth'd,
And two spears bore he. None could his onset have stay'd,
None save a God, and his eyes were blazing with fire,
And he turn'd to the throng of his comrades, calling to them
The wall to o'erleap, and they all his summons obey'd
Forthwith, some scaling the wall while some at his heels
Pass'd through the gate, and the Danaans fled in dismay
'Mong the hollow ships and clamour unceasing arose.

The Achaeans are encouraged by Poseidon to defend their ships. More incidents of the fighting. The valour of Idomeneus.

Now when Zeus the Trojans and Hector had brought to the ships,
 There did he leave them, to suffer much labour and woe
 Without cease; but himself his shining eyes turn'd away,
 Looking afar at the land of the Thracian horsemen
 And the Mysian men who fight at close range, and at those
 Whose drink is the milk of mares, the proud Hippemolgi,
 And the Abii, those who of all men most righteous are.
 Towards Troy no more his shining eyes did he turn,
 For little he deem'd in his heart that any Immortal
 Would come to give help to the Trojans or succour the Argives.
 But not blindly there watch'd the Lord, the Shaker of Earth,
 For he sat and marvell'd at all the fighting and fray,
 On the topmost height of forest-begirt Samothrace;
 For thence was the whole of Ida plain to be seen
 And plain were the city of Priam, the ships of the Argives.
 There sat he, for now he had come from his home in the sea,
 And seeing the Argives overcome by the Trojans,
 He had pity on them and with Zeus was mightily wroth.
 Down from the craggy hilltop went he at once,
 And swiftly he strode; and the lofty hills and the woods
 Trembled beneath his immortal feet as he went.
 Three strides did he take; with the fourth he came to his goal,
 Aegae, where, deep in the mere and gleaming with gold
 There stands for all time his palace imperishable.
 Thither came he and there to his chariot harness'd his steeds,
 Swift-flying, bronze-hoov'd, with manes flowing golden behind;
 With gold did he girdle his body, and gold was the whip
 And fitly-made, that he snatch'd as he stepp'd on his car,
 And drove out over the waves; from every side
 The beasts of the sea came forth from the deep and about him
 Sported and play'd, for they knew that he was their lord.
 And the sea for gladness parted before him, as on
 They sped, not wetting the axle of bronze beneath;
 And the prancing steeds took him on to the Argive ships.

A wide cavern there is in the depths of the mere
Midway between Tenedos' isle and rock-cover'd Imbros.
There the Shaker of Earth, Poseidon, halted his steeds
And unharness'd them and ambrosial fodder threw down
To graze on; about their feet he set hobbles of gold,
Not to be broken or loos'd, that there they might bide
The return of their lord, who went to the host of the Argives.

Now the Trojans, like flame or a storm-wind, all in a band
Were following Priam's son Hector, wild for the fray
And shouting and crying aloud, for they reckon'd to take
The Achæan ships and to slay there the best of the foe.
But Poseidon then, the Enfolder and Shaker of earth,
Urg'd on the Achæans, when forth he had come from the sea,
In the guise of Chælcas, his form, his unwearying voice.
The Ajaxes first he address'd, both eager themselves:
'Ye Ajaxes twain, ye shall save the host of the Argives
If ye but remember your might and not chilly fear.
The matchless hands of the Trojans I dread not, although
They have climb'd in a body over the mighty wall,
For the well-greav'd Achæans will keep them from nearer
assault.

But here do I strangely dread lest we suffer some evil,
Here where that madman is leading them on, like a flame,
This Hector, who claims almighty Zeus for his sire.
May some God put it into the heart of one of you twain
Here to stand firm yourselves and encourage the rest;
So, keen though he be, to the swift-faring ships ye might drive
him,

Though Olympian Zeus himself be urging him on.'
Then the Enfolder and Shaker of Earth with his staff
Both of them smote and fill'd them with valorous might,
And their limbs he made lightsome, their feet and above them
their hands.

And then, as a swift-wing'd hawk darts forth on her flight
And, poising aloft high over a sheer-faced crag,
Swoops over the plain in pursuit of some other bird:
So away from them sped Poseidon, the Shaker of Earth.
Swift Ajax, Æleus' son, first knew 'twas a God,
And at once to Ajax, Telamon's son, did he speak:
'Ajax, some one of the Gods of Olympus it is
Who in guise of the seer by the ships commands us to fight—
That was no Chælcas, the prophet and reader of signs,
For the form of his legs and his feet I saw from behind
As he went away; and the Gods are easily known.

And my heart also, within my very own breast,
Is all the more eager to go to the fighting and fray,
And my feet below and my hands above would be there.
Then Ajax, Telamon's son, made answer and said:
'So too would my matchless hands be grasping the spear
And my spirit is rous'd and my feet beneath me are swift;
I long to meet Priam's son Hector in single fight
And face to face, though his furious rage never cease.'
So one to the other they spake, and such were their words
In the joy of battle the God had set in their hearts.

Meantime the Shaker of Earth stirr'd up the Achaeans
Who behind, by the ships, were seeking their strength to renew;
Their limbs were wearied and spent by their grievous toil
And sorrow came into their hearts when they look'd at the
Trojans

Who had climb'd in a body over the mighty wall.
There were tears in their eyes as they look'd, for ruin they
thought
They could never avoid. But amidst them the Shaker of
Earth

Easily pass'd, arousing their glorious ranks.
To Teucer first did he come and Leitus, to rouse them,
To Peneleos, Thoas, Deipyrus, then to the lords
Of the war-cry, Antilochus coupled with Meriones.
'Twas these that he rous'd, and in winged words to them spake:
'For shame, ye Argives, ye callow lads! 'Twas in you
And your prowess in fight that I trusted to save our ships;
But if ye flinch from the dreadful horror of war,
The day has arriv'd for the Trojans to vanquish us quite.
Alas, a dread marvel is this that I see with mine eyes,
A dreadful thing that I thought would never come true:
On our ships the Trojans advancing, they that before
Were like fear-stricken hinds that, far in the wood, are the prey
Of jackals and pards and wolves, as they wander in vain,
Cowards and weak, and having no joy in a fight.
So of old the Trojans durst never abide and face
The might of Achaean hands, no, not for a moment.
But now far from the city they fight by the hollow ships
For our leader acts basely, and slack are the men of the host,
In their anger at him, they will not seek to defend
The hollow ships, but fast beside them are slain.
But if truly the cause of all this be Atreus' son,
The warrior King, Agamemnon who rules far and wide,
Because he dishonour'd Peleus' swift-footed son,

Even so should we never grow slack in waging the war.
Let us quickly atone; 'tis a noble heart that does that.
But no more is it well that ye slacken your furious might,
All ye that are best in the host; with one that in war
Kept back from the fray I never would quarrel, if he
Were a mere weakling; with you I am wroth in my heart.
O my friends, ye will make this evil more terrible yet
By this slackness of yours. Let every man in his heart
Dread blame and disgrace, for great is the strife that has risen.
By the ships fights mighty Hector, good at the war-cry,
And the long bar and the gates he has broken through.'

Thus did the Shaker of Earth the Achaeans arouse,
And about the Ajaxes twain the ranks made a stand,
So strong, that not Ares could part them or set them at naught,
Nor Athena that marshals the army; pick'd men and brave,
They awaited the onset of Hector and all of the Trojans,
With spear guarding spear and shield serried shield; they were
join'd

Man to man and buckler to buckler and helmet to helm;
And the horsehair crests on their glittering helmets touch'd
As they mov'd their heads, so close they were standing together,
And their spears overlapp'd as they shook them with sinewy
hands,

Their hearts unshaken, for eager they were for the fray.
The Trojans press'd on in a mass, while Hector in front
Made eager advance, like a boulder thrust forth from the brow
Of a cliff by a river swollen with wintry rains
That has snapp'd the supports of the pitiless stone; up on high
It flies with a bound and beneath it the forest re-echoes;
Swiftly it runs on its way, uncheck'd till it comes
To the level and there unwillingly ceases to roll.

So Hector a while through the huts and the ships of the Argives
Threaten'd lightly to pass to the sea, dealing death as he went;
But when he encounter'd the ranks set close in array
He was halted close by them; then faced him the sons of the
Argives,

Thrusting with spears and with lances double of edge,
And drave him away. Then Hector reel'd and recoil'd
But call'd with a piercing cry to the Trojan host:
'Ye Trojans and Lycians and ye that love hand-to-hand fight,
Dardanians, hold your ground; not long shall the Argives
Keep me back, though they cluster like stones close-set in a
wall;

Nay, before my spear they will yield, methinks, if in truth

Hera's thundering lord, the highest of Gods, sets me on.'
With these words, he arous'd in every man courage and
strength.

Then among them did Priam's son, high-hearted Deiphobus,
stride,

Holding in front of himself his rounded shield
And, lightly stepping, beneath its cover advanc'd.
With his shining spear then aim'd at him Meriones
Nor miss'd him, but smote on his rounded bull's-hide shield;
Yet it went not through; nay, rather, ere that should be,
The long shaft snapp'd in the socket. Deiphobus then
Away from him held the bull's-hide shield, for at heart
He dreaded the spear of wise-hearted Meriones.
But back to the throng of his friends shrank Meriones,
And for two things was he wondrously wroth in his heart,
The victory miss'd and the loss of his broken spear.
Then off he went to the huts and the ships of the Argives
To fetch a long spear he had left behind in his hut.

But the rest fought on and a cry unceasing arose.
And he that first slew his man was Telamon's son,
Teucer, bereaving the spearman Imbrius of life;
The son of Mentor, master of horses, he was,
And dwelt in Pedaeum ere came the sons of the Argives;
And his wife was a love-child of Priam's, Medesicaste.
But when the tossing ships of the Danaans came,
Back came he to Ilios, winning the Trojans' esteem
And dwelling with Priam, who lov'd him as one of his sons.
Him under the ear did the son of Telamon smite
With his long spear, and forth again from the wound
He drew the spear; and Imbrius fell like an ash
On a hill-top seen from afar upon every side,
That is fell'd with the bronze, bringing down the tender young
leaves;

So he fell, and his armour figur'd with bronze rang out.
Then Teucer rush'd eagerly forward to strip him of armour,
But Hector hurl'd, as he rush'd, his glittering spear.
Yet Teucer's eye was on him, and the spear he avoided
By a little space, and Hector Amphinachus smote,
Amphinachus, son of Cteatus, whose father was Actor;
On the breast he was hit by the spear as he came to the fray,
And he fell with a thud and about him his armour rang out.
Then forward rush'd Hector from noble Amphinachus' head
To tear off the helm that was fitted close to his brow,
But Ajax, as Hector rush'd, with his glittering spear

Let fly; yet he reach'd not the flesh, for in terrible bronze
Was Hector all armour'd, but smote the boss of his shield
And mightily thrust him back; to the rear he recoil'd
Of the two dead men, who were dragg'd away by the Argives.
Then Athenian leaders, Menestheus and Stichius nam'd,
Carried Amphimachus off to the host of the Argives,
While boldly the Ajaxes twain bore Imbrius off.

As a pair of lions snatch up a goat from some hounds
That are sharp of teeth, and bear it away in their jaws
Through the thick brushwood, and hold it well off the ground;
So the Ajaxes twain held Imbrius up and despoil'd him
Of his armour. The head did the son of Æleus cut
From the tender neck, in rage for Amphimachus' death,
And sent it rolling into the throng, like a ball,
Where down before Hector's feet it fell in the dust.

Then was Poseidon mightily wroth in his heart
When he saw his grandson fall in the terrible fray,
And along by the huts and the ships of the Argives he went
To arouse them, but woe for the Trojan host he devis'd.
And there Idomeneus met him, the spearman renown'd,
On his way from a comrade but newly come from the fray
Whom the sharp bronze had smitten hard by the knee.
Him had his friends carried off, but Idomeneus then
Having told the leeches, was going to make for his hut,
For still he was eager to take his part in the fray;
But unto him spake the Lord, the Shaker of Earth,
Making his voice like Thoas's, son of Andraemon,
Who in all Pleuron and lofty Calydon rul'd
The Aetolian folk, and was honour'd by them as a God:
'O Counsellor of the Cretans, Idomeneus, say
Where now are the threats that the Argives cast at the Tro-
jans?'

Then answer the Cretan leader, Idomeneus, made:
'Thoas, so far as I know, there is no man at fault,
For well we all know how to battle against the foe;
No man has lost heart through terror; no one in dread
Keeps back from the horror of war. But this, I suppose,
Must be the good pleasure of Zeus, excelling in might,
That here the Achaeans should perish, from Argos afar,
With none to remember their name. But, Thoas, of old
Thou wast ever a man to stay thy ground in the fight
And encourage any man else whom thou sawest hold back;
So now do not cease, but call to each warrior here.'

Then in answer Poseidon spake, the Shaker of Earth:

'May he never return from Troyland, Idomeneus, back
To his own home, whosoever is slack in the fight,
But here may his body become the plaything of dogs,
If upon this day he purposely shrinks from the fight.
But come, on with thine arms and away! For we two
Must battle together, if haply our strife may avail.
Union brings courage to men, though cowards alone,
But we two know well how to fight against valorous men.'
With these words he went back, a God to the struggle of men;
And Idomeneus, when he had come to his well-built hut,
Put about him his beautiful armour, and, grasping two spears,
Went forth like as the lightning that Zeus in his hand
Seizes and shakes all about from gleaming Olympus,
And bright are the flashes he shews as a sign to mankind;
So, as he ran, did the bronze shine forth on his breast.
And there met him Meriones, his valiant squire,
Close by the hut, to which he was going to fetch
A spear of bronze; then spake great Idomeneus thus:
'Meriones, son of Molus, dearest to me
Of all my comrades, and speedy of foot, for what cause
Hast thou left the fighting and fray to come to this place?
Art thou wounded, perchance? Does the point of a dart give
thee pain?

Or art thou come with a message? As for myself,
I am eager to join in the fray, not abide in the huts.'

Then in answer to him spake prudent Meriones:
'Idomeneus, thou commander of bronze-coated Cretans,
I am on my way to the huts, if chance thou hast left there
A spear; for the one that I used of old has been snapp'd
As I cast at the haughty Deiphobus, smiting his shield.'
Then answer the Cretan leader, Idomeneus, made:
'Spears, if thou wilt, whether one or twenty, thou'lt find
By my hut's bright entrance-wall and standing against it—
Trojan spears, the spoils of the men I have slain;
It is not my way to fight with the foe from afar,
And for that I have spears and shields that swell to a boss
And helmets as well and corslets brightly agleam.'
Then in answer to him spake prudent Meriones:
'Many spoils of the Trojans I, too, have stor'd in my hut
And my black ship; not at hand, though, for me to take up.
I too, as I think, am not forgetful of valour;
'Mid the foremost fighters in battle where men win renown
I take my stand, when arises the striving of war.
Some other bronze-coated Achaean might fail to perceive

My might in the fray, but to thee, methinks, 'tis well known.'
Then answer the Cretan leader, Idomeneus, made:
'Thy valour I know; why needest thou tell me of it?
If now we best of the host were pick'd by the ships
For an ambush, wherein it is easy to see who is brave—
For there are reveal'd both coward and valiant alike;
The coward's complexion is never the same for a moment,
Nor the heart of him firmly resolv'd to abide where he is;
But he changes position and shifts from one foot to the other,
And the heart within him loudly pounds in his breast
As he thinks upon death, and his teeth chatter fast at the
thought;

But the brave man's complexion is ever the same; and once
He has taken his place in the ambush, he fears not o'ermuch
But prays he may join in the fray as soon as may be—
Not even then would a man make light of thy valour;
For if in the mellay a dart should give thee a wound,
It would smite thee, not from behind, on the neck or the back,
But would light on thy breast or thy belly, as onward thou
spedst

Pressing on to the place where the foremost fighters were met.
But come, let us not like two little boys tarry here
Talking, lest someone thereat be wroth beyond bounds;
But go to thy hut and get thee a mighty spear.'

So spake he, and Meriones, the peer of swift Ares,
Speedily took a spear of bronze from the hut,
And, battle at heart, he after Idomeneus went.
As manslaying Ares goes forth to war, and his son
Rout follows after, mighty and fearless of heart,
Making the boldest warrior flee from the field—
For, arming together, the twain go to join the Ephyri
Or the great-hearted Phleggyans, after departing from Thrace;
Yet they hark not to both, giving victory to one side alone—
So Meriones and Idomeneus, leaders of men,
Went forth to the fight, all armour'd in glittering bronze.
And first to Idomeneus spake brave Meriones:

'Deucalion's son, at what point wilt thou enter the throng?
On the right of the whole of the army, or straight in their midst
Or along to the left? for there, as it seems to me,
Are the long-hair'd Achaeans most likely to fail in the fight.'
Then answer the Cretan leader, Idomeneus, made:
'In the midst of the ships there are others to stand in defence,
The two Ajaxes, aye, and Teucer, of all the Achaeans
Best with the bow and good in a hand-to-hand fight;

These will give Priam's son Hector a surfeit of war
However eager, however stalwart he be.
Hard it shall be for him, though he longs for the fray,
To vanquish the might of their dread, invincible hands
And to fire the ships, unless that Cronion himself
On the swift ships should scatter a blazing brand.
To no man would the great Telamonian Ajax give in,
To no mortal that eats of the grain that Demeter gives
And that bronze may wound or a mighty boulder destroy.
Not ev'n to Achilles, who breaks up the ranks, would he yield,
At least, in hand-to-hand fight; for in fleetness of foot
There is never a man that can swift Achilles outrun.
Let us make, as thou say'st, for the left of the host, that at once
We may know whether glory to-day we shall win or shall lose.'

So spake he, and Meriones, the peer of swift Ares,
Led him up to that part of the host where he meant to attack.
When the Trojans saw Idomeneus, strong as a flame,
Dress'd, like his squire, in armour richly engrav'd,
They call'd one to the other, and all of them set upon him;
Men struggled together beside the sterns of the ships.
And as gusts haste along, driven on by the shrill-piping winds,
On a day when the dust lies thickest upon the roads,
And it swirls about in a great and wavering cloud;
So was the clash of the battle, and men in their hearts
Were eager to slay one another with sharp-edged bronze.
With long spears did the battle, deadly to mortals,
Bristle, with flesh-tearing spears; and dazzled the eyes
The glare of bronze from helmets that glitter'd afar
And corslets new-shin'd and gleaming shields, as the men
Advanc'd in a throng; yea, hard of heart had he been
Whom the sight of this war-gear had neither gladden'd nor
griev'd.

So the two mighty sons of Cronos, in purpose apart,
For mortal warriors woes full grievous devis'd.
The Trojans and Hector it was Zeus wanted to win,
To give glory to swift-foot Achilles; not all of the host
Of the Argives he wish'd to perish in front of Troy,
But glory for Thetis he will'd, and her strong-hearted son.
But Poseidon in secret would steal from the hoar-grey sea
To mix with the Argives, arousing them; sorely he griev'd
That the Trojans should win, and with Zeus was he mightily
wroth.

For the lineage of both and the father was one and the same,
Though Zeus was the elder born and the wiser. For this

Did Poseidon avoid giving open help to the Argives
But in secret arous'd their host, in guise of a man.
So the rope of mighty strife and even-match'd war
Above both of the armies the two of them tied in a knot,
Pulling it taut, a knot that no one might break,
No one might loose, though itself loos'd many a life.

Then Idomeneus, 'spite that his hair was already half-grey,
To the Danaans calling aloud, leapt into the fight
And, plunging amid the Trojans, put them to flight.
For Othryoneus slew he, a sojourner come from Cabetes,
Who had newly arriv'd on hearing the news of the war;
And he ask'd of Priam his daughter most fair to behold,
Cassandra; no gift did he bring, but promis'd this boon,
From Troyland perforce to drive the Achaeans away.
And the old man Priam made promise to give her to him,
Nodding assent; he, trusting his word, join'd the fray.
But at him aim'd Idomeneus then with his glittering spear
As proudly he strode, and smote him; his corslet of bronze
That he wore, avail'd not; the spear struck him full in the belly,
And he fell with a thud. Then above him his slayer rejoic'd:
'Othryoneus, happy I deem thee all mortals above,
If indeed thou canst bring all to pass of the promise thou
madest

To Dardanian Priam, who promis'd his daughter to thee.
We too would promise the like and bring it to pass,
Fetching from Argos a maiden to give thee to wife,
That daughter of Atreus' son most fair to behold,
If thou wilt but join us in sacking well-peopled Troy.
Come along to the sea-faring ships, to settle the terms;
Be assur'd that we ask not much for the gifts of betrothal.'
With these words, through the press of the battle Idomeneus
then

By the foot dragg'd him; but Asius came to his aid,
On foot in front of his steeds, which his charioteer,
Who was also his squire, ever drave so near that their breath
Might play on his shoulders. Now Asius long'd in his heart
To smite Idomeneus; but the latter forestall'd him
And, casting at him with his spear, he wounded his throat
Under the chin, and drave the weapon right through.
Down he fell as an oak falls down, or a poplar
Or a lofty pine in the hills, that the woodmen fell
With whetted axes, to make them timber for ships;
So in front of his horses and chariot Asius lay,
Groaning aloud as he clutched at the blood-wet dust.

And his charioteer, in terror, kept not his wits,
Nor durst he, to make his escape from the hands of his foes,
Turn the horses about; at him did Antilochus aim
And smote him full in the midst; his corslet of bronze
That he wore, avail'd not; the spear struck him full in the belly
And out of his well-built chariot gasping he fell,
And his horses Antilochus, son of the great-hearted Nestor,
Drave from the Trojans ranks to the well-greav'd Achaeans'.

Then, grieving for Asius, nigh did Deiphobus draw
To Idomeneus' side and his glittering spear he let fly.
But he saw him cast, and avoided the spear of bronze,
Taking cover beneath the rounded shield that he bore;
It was cunningly wrought of bull's-hide and glittering bronze
With a pair of bars fitted on, wherewith to take hold.
Beneath it he crouch'd, and the spear of bronze flew above;
And the shield gave a hollow ring when graz'd by the spear.
Yet not vainly Deiphobus hurl'd the spear with his hand,
For Hypsenor he smote, son of Hippasus, shepherd of men,
In the liver, beneath the midriff, unstringing his limbs.
Then grimly exulted Deiphobus, shouting aloud:
'Not unaveng'd does Asius lie, for methinks
His heart will rejoice on his way to the house of the dead,
For here have I given him one to walk at his side.'
So he spake, exulting, and griev'd were the Argives thereat;
And wise Antilochus' heart did he stir most of all;
Yet he, though sorely he griev'd, forgot not his friend
But ran to bestride him and cover him up with his shield.
Then down there stoop'd two trusty comrades of his,
Mecisteus, Echius' son, and goodly Alastor,
And carried the groaning man to the hollow ships.
But Idomeneus never slacken'd his furious might,
Ever longing some Trojan to wrap in the darkness of night,
Or to fall himself in keeping doom from the Argives.
Now Aesyetes, foster'd of Zeus, had a son,
The warrior Alcathous, son-in-law to Anchises,
Whose eldest daughter, Hippodameia, he wed.
The heart's delight of her father and mother she was,
At home in their hall; all girls of her age she surpass'd
In beauty and skill and in wisdom; therefore he wed her,
Alcathous, he that in all wide Troy was the best.
Him Poseidon brought low, by means of Idomeneus;
His bright eyes enchanting and snaring his glorious limbs;
Backward he could not flee, nor avoid the spear;
But like as a pillar he stood, or a high, leafy tree,

Unmoving, and full in his breast there darted the spear
 Of the warrior Idomeneus; it cut through the bronze
 Of his mail, that of old ever warded death from his flesh,
 But sharply now rang, being cloven through by the spear;
 And he fell with a thud, and the spear stuck fast in his heart,
 That, beating still, made quiver the end of the spear;
 And there at length made Ares its fury to cease.
 But grimly exulted Idomeneus, and he cried:
 'Shall we say, Deiphobus, now, that the score is even—
 Three men to one? Full much dost thou boast of thy slaying;
 But, sirrah, stand forth thyself and face me, to know
 What manner of man is come hither—a son of Zeus;
 For Zeus begat Minos and made him the warden of Crete;
 And Minos begat Deucalion, peerless of men;
 And I am his son, the ruler of many a man
 In wide-spread Crete; and now have the ships brought me hither
 To bring woe on thy father and thee and the rest of the Trojans.'
 So he spake, and Deiphobus then was divided in mind;
 Should he fall back and one of the great-hearted Trojans
 Take to support him, or face the contest alone?
 And thus as he ponder'd, this counsel seem'd to him best,
 To go after Aeneas. And him standing last in the throng
 He found, for ever with goodly Priam wrathful was he,
 Since, brave though he was, no honour of Priam he had.
 Then nigh him Deiphobus drew and spake winged words:
 'Aeneas, the Trojans' counsellor, now must thou come
 To the help of thy brother-in-law, if sorrow can stir thee;
 Follow me and assist Alcathous, him that of old
 In his hall did rear thee, when thou wast yet but a child,
 Being thy brother-in-law; for I tell thee now
 To Idomeneus he has fallen, the spearman renown'd.'
 So he spake, and the heart of Aeneas he rous'd in his breast,
 And, battle at heart, he went to seek Idomeneus.
 But Idomeneus never fear'd like a puny child,
 But abode like a boar in the hills who trusts in his strength,
 Awaiting the onset and shouts of a rabble of men
 In a lonely place; he bristles and arches his back,
 And his eyes are ablaze with fire and he whets his teeth
 In his eager desire both hounds and men to ward off.
 So Idomeneus the spearman renown'd not a whit
 Gave ground, but awaited the charge of Aeneas, who came
 To give help to Deiphobus. Yet did he call to his friends,
 And look'd to Ascalaphus, Aphareus, Deipyrus
 And Meriones and Antilochus, lords of the war-cry.

In winged words did he speak to them, spurring them on:
'Hither, friends, and help me, for I am alone, and I fear
The onset of swift-foot Aeneas, who comes to attack me;
A mighty slayer of men is he in the fray,
And his is the bloom of youth, when men are most strong.
If we were as much alike in age as in mood,
Great victory soon were his, or soon were it mine.'
So he spake, and all, with a single thought in their minds,
Together stood firm, on their shoulders leaning their shields.
On the other side did Aeneas call to his friends,
To Deiphobus looking, and Paris and goodly Agenor,
Who with him were the Trojan leaders; and after them came
The host, as sheep follow after the ram to the brook
From the place of pasture, and glad is the shepherd's heart;
So was the heart of Aeneas glad in his breast
When he saw the throng of the host that after him came.
Then over Alcathous clash'd they in hand-to-hand fight
With their long spears; and terribly rang on their breasts
The bronze, as amid the press they aim'd at each other;
And above all others two men of valour there were,
Idomeneus and Aeneas, peers of the war-god,
Each eager to cut at the other with pitiless bronze.
And Aeneas it was that cast at Idomeneus first;
But he saw him cast, and avoided the spear of bronze,
And the spear of Aeneas sank quivering into the ground,
For in vain out of his mighty hand it had sped.
But Idomeneus hit Oenomaus full in the belly,
Breaking the plate of his corslet, and through it the bronze
Let the bowels out; and he fell there, clutching the dust.
And Idomeneus drew from the corpse his long-shadow'd spear
Yet could he not avail to strip from the shoulders
The beautiful arms, being sorely with weapons beset.
For no longer firm were the joints of his feet in a charge,
To follow his own cast up, or another's avoid.
So in hand-to-hand fighting he warded off terrible doom,
For no longer his feet carried him with speed from the war.
As he slowly departed, at him his glittering spear
Deiphobus hurl'd, for he hated him still without cease.
But he miss'd him again, and Ascalaphus smote with the spear,
A son of the War-god; and straight through the shoulder it
sped,
The mighty spear; and he fell there, clutching the dust.
Not yet was the mighty, loud-voic'd Ares aware
That his son had fallen amid the terrible strife;

Under the golden clouds on the peak of Olympus
He sate, constrain'd by the will of Zeus, and there too
Were the other Immortals, forbidden to join in the war.

Then over Ascalaphus clash'd they in hand-to-hand fight,
And his shining helmet Deiphobus wrench'd from his head;
But on him leapt Heriones, the peer of swift Ares,
Smiting his arm with a spear, and out of his hand
The vizor'd helmet fell to the ground with a clang.
Then Meriones once again sprang forth, like a vulture,
And forth from the arm of Deiphobus drew the dread spear
And then shrank back 'mid his friends. Then did Polites,
Deiphobus' brother, about his waist put his arm
And lead him away from the dolorous fight, till they came
To the swift horses and chariot richly adorn'd
And the driver, that waited for him at the rear of the fight,
They carried him, weak as he was and heavily groaning,
To the city; and down ran the blood from his new-wounded
arm.

But the rest fought on and a cry unceasing arose.
Then Aeneas leapt upon Aphareus, son of Caletor,
Who was facing him, and smote his throat with his spear;
His head sank to one side, and buckler and helm
Fell upon him, and round him spread death, the destroyer of
life.

But Antilochus, bidding his time, leapt out upon Thoön
When his back was turn'd, and thrust at him, cutting right
through

The vein running up from the back till it reaches the neck;
Right through did he cut it; and backwards into the dust
Fell Thoön, stretching his hands to the friends that he lov'd.
But Antilochus leapt on him, stripping his shoulders of armour,
With a glance around; for the Trojans clos'd round him and
thrust

Now this way, now that, on his broad and glittering shield.
Yet pierce it they could not nor score with the pitiless bronze
His tender flesh; for Poseidon, the Shaker of Earth,
Amid weapons full many kept ward upon Nestor's son.
Never free of the foe was Antilochus; caught in their midst,
He kept on turning, his spear never still, but shaken
Or brandish'd aloft; for this was the aim of his heart,
To cast at some foeman or charge him in hand-to-hand fight.
But not unnotic'd was he as he cast in the throng;
He was mark'd by Adamas, Asius' son, who assail'd him
From close at hand, and thrust at him full on the shield

With the sharp bronze; but the spear was bereft of its might
By dark-hair'd Poseidon, who grudg'd it Antilochus' life.
And part of the spear remain'd in Antilochus' shield,
Like a charr'd stake, and the other half lay on the ground.
And Adamas, fearful of fate, shrank back 'mid his friends.
But Meriones, as he went, follow'd after and smote him
With his spear, between the man's privy parts and his navel,
Where the wounds of war are most cruel to wretched men.
There fix'd he his spear, and, falling about the shaft,
Adamas writh'd like a bull that men in the hills
Have bound with ropes, to drag him unwilling away;
So he, being smitten, writh'd for a while, but not long,
Till the warrior Meriones came nigh him and pluck'd
The spear from his flesh; and darkness enfolded his eyes.
Then in hand-to-hand fight Helenus Deipyrus smote
With a great Thracian sword, on the temple, and dash'd off his
helms;

And, torn from his head, it roll'd to the ground, and an Argive,
As it roll'd at the feet of the fighters, gather'd it up;
But the darkness of night on the eyes of Deipyrus fell.
Then griev'd for his death Menelaus, good at the war-cry,
And up to lord Helenus strode he, threatening him
And shaking his spear, while Helenus bended his bow.
So both in a single moment let fly, the one
With his sharp spear, with a shaft from the string the other.
Then the arrow of Helenus smote on the breast of his foe,
On his corslet-plate, and the piercing shaft sped aside;
And as from the flat of the shovel leap in the air
Black-skin'd beans or pulse in a threshing-floor wide,
Driven on by the shrilling draught and the winnower's might;
So from the corslet of great Menelaus it glanc'd,
The piercing shaft, and away from it darted afar,
Then smote Menelaus, good at the war-cry, the hand
With which Helenus then was holding his well-polish'd bow,
And the spear went right through his hand and into the bow.
Then back he shrank 'mid his friends, in fear of his fate,
His arm hanging limp, and the spear of ash dragging after.
And great-soul'd Agenor pluck'd the spear from his hand
And bound it up with fine-twisted sheep's-wool, a sling
That his squire was carrying for him, the shepherd of men.
Then straightway Peisander made for great Menelaus,
But an evil fate was leading him on to his death,
To be slain by thee, Menelaus, in terrible strife.
And as they came nigh one another and made to attack,

Menelaus smote him and miss'd, for the spear fled aside;
But Peisander thrust at the shield of great Menelaus
Yet he fail'd to drive clean through it his spear of bronze;
For the broad shield prevented it, yea, in the socket
It snapp'd; yet he, glad at heart, for victory hop'd.
But Atrides, grasping his sword with the silver studs
Leapt on Peisander, who grasp'd from under his shield
A goodly bronze axe with an olive-wood haft, very smooth
And lengthy to boot; and together each went for the other.
Peisander smote Menelaus on top of his helm,
On the horn under the plume and the horse-hair crest;
But ev'n as he turn'd, Menelaus struck at his brow
At the base of his nose; and then did the bones crack aloud
And his eyes, all bloody, fell down in the dust at his feet.
He stagger'd and fell; and Atrides set foot on his breast
And stripp'd him of armour, and over him triumph'd and said:
'Like this shall ye leave the ships of the swift-hors'd Achaeans,
Ye arrogant Trojans, athirst for the sound of the fray.
And of other despite and shame not lacking are ye,
For ye put me to shame, vile curs that ye are, and at heart
Ye fear'd not the heavy wrath of thundering Zeus,
God of host and guest, who will bring your high city low;
For my true-wedded wife and treasure full much did ye bear
Wantonly over the sea, when ye were her guests;
And now yet again ye would fling on our sea-faring ships
Devouring fire, and the Argive warriors slay.
But ye shall be stay'd, though eager for battle ye be.
Father Zeus, men say that in wisdom thou art supreme,
Above men and Gods; yet in thee all this was its source,
For now dost thou shew thy favour to arrogant men,
To the Trojans of insolent might, who never can tire
Of the dreadful clamour of battle evenly match'd.
Men tire of all things, in time, of sleep and of love
And of sweet music they tire, and the charm of the dance;
Of these far sooner would any man else have his fill
Than of war; but the Trojans of battle have never enough.'

With these words, Menelaus the peerless stripp'd from the
corpse

The bloodstain'd armour, and gave it in charge to his friends,
But himself with the foremost fighters mingled again.
Then leapt to attack him King Pylaemenes' son,
Harpalion, he who had follow'd his father to Troy
And the war; but never did he to his country return.
From near at hand he thrust at the shield of Atrides

In the midst, but fail'd to drive clean through it his spear,
And back he shrank 'mid his friends, in fear of his fate,
Glancing all round, lest his body be hurt by the bronze.
But, as he retir'd, with a bronze-tipp'd arrow there smote him
On the right buttock Meriones; and the shaft
Pierc'd him through to the bladder under the bone.
Down he sat where he was, in the arms of his friends
Gasping his life out, and then like a worm on the ground
Lay prone; and the dark blood flow'd and bedew'd the earth.
And the great-hearted Paphlagonians gather'd around
And, lifting him on to a chariot, took him to Troy,
Grieving for him; and his father went with them in tears;
But no-one ever aveng'd him his son that was dead.
Full wroth in his heart was Paris because he was slain,
For along with many a Paphlagonian man
Harpalion was his guest; and in wrath for his sake
He shot a bronze-tipp'd arrow into the throng.
A certain Euchenor there was, the son of the seer
Polyidus, a rich man and brave, with Corinth his home.
Well knowing his ruinous fate he had boarded his ship,
For often the good old man Polyidus would say
He would perish at home in his halls of a deadly disease
Or amid the ships of the Argives by Trojans be slain.
Thus he 'scaped at once from the heavy fine of the Argives
And the hateful disease, that his heart might suffer no pain.
Under the jaw, by the ear, he was hurt, and his soul
Fled from his limbs, in hateful darkness o'erwhelm'd.

But the fighting ever went on, like the blaze of a fire;
But Hector, beloved of Zeus, had heard not, nor knew
That the Argives among his men to the left of the ships
Were dealing death; and soon the Achaeans had won
Renown; for them the Enfolder and Shaker of Earth
Was urging on, himself their mighty defence.
But Hector kept where he first had made his way in
Through the gate and the wall, and broken the close-pack'd
ranks

Of the Danaans bearing the shield; this was the place
Where the ships of Ajax and Protesilaus were beach'd
On the shore of the hoar-grey sea, and beyond them the wall
Was built the lowest; for there, above anywhere else,
Most fiercely the men and their horses rag'd in the fray.
The Boeotians there and Ionians, wearers of tunics
That trail, the Locrians, Phthians, and splendid Epeians
Were scarcely able to stay his attack on the ships

Nor were they able to thrust away from themselves
The goodly Hector, who set on them fierce as a flame.
There were pick'd men there from Athens, among them Menes-
theus,

Peteos' son, and he was their leader; and with him
There follow'd Stichius, Pheidias, and Bias the brave;
And Meges, Phleus' son, the Epeians led
With Dracius and Amphion; and over the Phthians
Were Medon and Podarces, staunch in the fray.
A bastard son of Öileus, like to the Gods,
Was Melon, and brother of Ajax; but far from his home
In the land of Phlace he dwelt, having slain a man—
Eriopis his stepmother's kin, that was wife to Öileus;
Podarces was Iphiclus' son, whose father was Phylax.
In front of the great-soul'd Phthians these in their armour
With Boeotians to help them, fought in defence of the ships.
And no more would Ajax, the swift-foot son of Öileus,
Leave Ajax, the son of Telamon, no, not a moment;
As a pair of wine-dark oxen in fallow land
Alike in effort strain at the jointed plough,
And the sweat pours at the base of their horns in a stream;
With nought but the well-polish'd yoke to keep them apart
As they plod down the furrow and stop at the end of the tilth;
So the Ajaxes stood, keeping each at the other's side.

Now Telamon's son was follow'd by many and brave,
Hosts of his friends, who, whenever his limbs were o'ercome
With sweat or with weariness, carried for him his shield.
But no Locrians follow'd the great-hearted son of Öileus,
For in hand-to-hand fighting their hearts were not firm and
unmov'd,

For they had no brazen helmets with horse-hair crest,
Nor shields well-rounded had they, nor lances of ash,
But in bows and slings made of well-twisted wool was their trust
When they came to Ilios with him, and, shooting with these,
Thick and fast, they sought to break up the ranks of the
Trojans.

So one band in front, in their armour richly adorn'd
Fought with the Trojans and Hector, accoutred with bronze,
And the other, behind them, kept shooting unseen, and the
Trojans

Confus'd by the arrows, lost all delight in the fray.
Ruefully then had the Trojan host given ground
And to windy Troy return'd from the ships and the huts,
Had not Polydamas stood by bold Hector and said:

'Thou art hard to deal with, Hector, hard to advise;
Because heaven has made thee supreme in matters of war,
In counsel too thou wilt have thyself to excel;
But alone thou canst not accomplish all things at once.
To one man heaven gives wisdom to fight, to another
Dancing is given, or singing, or playing the lute;
In the breast of another yet does far-seeing Zeus
Put a thoughtful mind, to avail full many a man—
And many he saves, as he knows full surely himself.
I therefore will tell thee now what seems to me best:
Thou art ring'd about on all sides with the blaze of war;
The great-hearted Trojans have made their way over the wall,
But some stand aloof with their armour, others, dispers'd
'Mid the ships, battle on, outnumber'd, against the foe.
Give ground, and call thou hither the bravest and best;
Then shall we settle what plan we were best to pursue,
Whether to fall on the well-bench'd ships, if so be
Heaven wills that we be the victors, or else to return
Back from the ships; for sorely I fear that the Argives
Will repay yesterday's score, since hard by the ships
There abides a man that is eager for battle, a man
Who no longer will keep entirely aloof from the war.'
So Polydamas spake, and his counsel was pleasing to Hector;
Straightway from his chariot he leapt, all arm'd, to the ground;
And in winged words he address'd him and spake to him thus:
'Polydamas, keep thou here the best of the men,
While I go thither and face the fury of war;
My commands will I give them, and then will I quickly return.'

So he spake, and departed, glinting like snow on the hills,
And shouting he sped 'mid the Trojans and their allies.
And all, when they heard the voice of Hector, ran up
To Panthöus' son, Polydamas, kindly and wise.
But Hector rang'd through the foremost fighters, in quest
Of Deiphobus and of Helenus, lordly and brave,
And he sought also for Adamas, Asius' son,
And the son of Hyrtacus, Asius, hoping to find them;
But he found them no longer unscath'd nor wholly unhurt,
For some by the sterns of the ships of the Argives lay,
No longer alive, but slain at the hands of the Argives,
While some were within the wall, sore wounded and hurt.
But one did he speedily find to the left of the fray,
The lord of the fair-tress'd Helen, divine Alexander,
Urging his friends to the fight and heartening them;
And nigh him he drew and in words of rebuke to him spake:

'Fell Paris, thou fair-look'd seducer, mad for the women,
Where is brave prince Helenus, where is Deiphobus now?
Where Adamas, pray, and Asius, Hyrtacus' son?
And Othryoneus, where is he? Utter ruin is come
Upon high-built Troy; complete destruction is sure.'
Then answer to him did godlike Paris return:
'Hector, a blameless man thou art minded to blame;
At another time, perchance, I kept from the fray,
But not now—not an utter coward my mother bare.
From the time thou didst rouse thy comrades to fight by the
ships,

Here have we stay'd and fought with the Danaan men
With never a respite. The comrades thou seekest are dead;
Deiphobus only and Helenus, lordly and brave,
Have retir'd from the fighting, both of them hurt in the arm
With long spears; but Cronion kept them from death.
But lead on now where thy heart and thy spirit shall bid;
And eagerly will we come after thee; nor, as I think,
Shall we lack for valour, so far as our strength will allow,
For beyond his strength can no man, though eager, do battle.'

So the warrior spake, and persuaded his brother's mind;
And thither they went where the clamour of war was most
fierce,

About Kebriones and Polydamas, peerless and brave,
And Orthaeus and Phalces and godlike, brave Polyphetes
And Palmys too and likewise Hippotion's sons,
Ascanius and Morys; these on the morning before
Had come from Ascania's deep-soil'd land to relieve
Their fellow fighters; and now Zeus rous'd them to fight.
On they rush'd like the bluster of violent winds
That beneath the thunder of Zeus come down to the earth
And with marvellous uproar mix with the sea; and thence
Many waves swell up on the loudly-resounding sea,
High-arching and white, some in front and others behind;
So the Trojans, gleaming with bronze and in close array,
Some in front and others behind, follow'd after their leaders.
They were led by manslaying Hector, the peer of the War-god
And Priam's son; his rounded shield was before him,
Close-pack'd with hides, with bronze welded thickly thereon,
And about his temples nodded his glittering helm.
Hither and thither he strode, to see which of the ranks
Would yield before him as, sheltering under his shield,
He charg'd; but he shook not the hearts in the breasts of the
Argives.

Then Ajax, striding towards him, challeng'd him first:
'Good sir, draw nigh; why seekest thou thus the Achaeans
To fill with fear? Not unskill'd in battle are we,
But us Argives the evil scourge of Zeus has subdu'd.
No doubt thou hopest at heart our ships to despoil,
But we have hands as well to defend them from you;
But long before that, I tell thee, your well-peopled town
These hands of ours shall take and plunder and waste.
As for thyself, I tell thee the day is at hand
When in flight thou shalt pray to Zeus and the other Immortals
That thy fair-maned horses fleetier than falcons may be
As they bear thee to Ilios, raising the dust of the plain.'
Ev'n as he spake then, a bird flew forth on the right,
A high-flying eagle; the Argive host gave a shout,
Rejoic'd by the omen; but thus replied glorious Hector:
'What a speech thou hast made, thou braggart, thou blunderer,
Ajax!'

As surely as I would have Zeus who carries the shield
My father for all my days, and Hera my mother,
And myself esteem'd as Athena is, and Apollo;
So surely this day bodes ill for all of the Argives,
Among them thou shalt be slain, if thou art so bold
As to face my spear, that shall tear thy lily-white skin;
Thou shalt fall by the Argive ships, and the dogs of the Trojans,
Aye, and the birds, with thy fat and thy flesh shall be fill'd.'
So speaking, he led the way, and with marvellous uproar
They follow'd behind, and the host in the rear gave a shout.
And the Argives shouted in answer, nor ever their might
Forgot, but awaited the charge of the best of the Trojans;
And on either side the clamour of both of the hosts
Rose to the bright upper air and the splendour of Zeus.

Zeus is deceived by Hera and Sleep, while Poseidon spurs on the Achaeans to withstand Hector, who is wounded by Ajax.

YET Nestor, for all he was drinking, could not but hear
 The tumult of battle, but spake to Asclepius' son
 These winged words: 'Bethink thee, goodly Machaon,
 What shall the outcome be of all this affair.
 Louder they shout, the sturdy youths by the ships;
 But sit for the nonce and drink of the fiery wine,
 Till the lovely-hair'd Hecamedea warm thee a bath
 And wash from thy wound the blood that has clotted; but I
 Will make speed to a lookout and see what things are afoot.'
 So saying, he picked up a shield that lay in the hut,
 Well-wrought and gleaming with bronze; it belonged to his son,
 Thrasymedes, tamer of horses, but he had his sire's.
 Then, grasping a valorous spear, tipped sharply with bronze,
 He stepped out of the hut, and at once saw a dolorous sight—
 His comrades in flight, and, driving them on from behind,
 The insolent Trojans: the Argive rampart was down.
 As when the great sea grows livid and heaves without sound,
 Foreboding the speeding paths of the screaming gales,
 Though but vaguely, and rolls nor this way nor that, till at last
 Zeus sends from on high some wind that steadily blows:
 Even so did the old man ponder, divided in mind
 Both this way and that, uncertain whether to haste
 To the Danaan host and their swiftfoot horses, or else
 Seek out Agamemnon Atrides, the shepherd of men.
 And thus as he pondered, this course then seemed to him best,
 To seek Agamemnon. But all this while did the hosts
 Slay one another in fight; and the stubborn bronze
 Clashed on their bodies as one at the other thrust
 With a stroke of the sword and with lances double of edge.
 Now Nestor was met by the kings that were foster'd of Zeus,
 Coming up from the ships; to all had the bronze given wounds—
 Diomed, Odysseus, and Atreus' son, Agamemnon.
 Far off from the fray their ships were drawn up, on the shore
 Of the hoar-grey sea; for these were the first they had beached
 On land, but in front of the hindmost built up the wall.

For, wide as it was, the beach was unable to hold
The whole of the fleet, and the host was straitened for room.
Therefore they beached the vessels rank upon rank,
And the wide shore enclosed by the headlands was filled.
Now inland together the kings were making their way
To have sight of the battle and fray, leaning each on his spear,
And with sorrowing hearts in their breasts; and, meeting with
them,

The old man Nestor made heavy their Dánaan hearts.

Then the lord Agamemnon spake, addressing him thus:

‘Why hast thou left the murderous fray to come hither?

O Nestor, great glory of Argos, Neleus’ son,

I dread lest the mighty Hector should keep to his word,

And fulfil the threat that amid the Trojans he spake,

Ne’er to retire to Ilios, leaving the ships,

Till he burned our vessels with fire and slaughtered us all:

Such was his word—and now it is coming to pass.

Alas, it must be that the other well-greav’d Achaeans

Partake of the grudge that Achilles bears me at heart

And have no list by the sterns of the vessels to fight.’

Then Nestor, the knight of Gerenia, spake in reply:

‘Yea, truly has this come about, and no different course

Could Zeus himself, that on high makes thunder, devise.

For the wall is beaten down that once we believ’d

A defence unassailable both for our vessels and us.

Our foes by the speeding ships fight on without cease,

Making no end; and, spy thou never so close,

Thou couldst not tell which way the Achaeans are routed,

So random the slaughter, so vague the shouts that ascend

To the heaven’s height. But for us, let us think what to do,

If thinking may help; from one thing I bid we refrain,

From joining the battle—a wounded man cannot fight.’

Then again made answer the king of men, Agamemnon:

‘Nestor, since now by the sterns of the vessels they fight

And the well-built wall has avail’d us not, nor the trench

That the Danaans laboured so hard at, hoping at heart

It would prove a defence unassailable both for their ships

And themselves also—the pleasure it seems of Zeus,

Supreme in power, that here the Achaeans should perish,

Afar from Argos, to lie in a nameless grave.

When he willingly help’d the Achaeans, I knew it then;

I know it now by the glory he gives to our foes

As to blessed Gods, but the might of our hands he has bound.

But come, let us all obey and do as I bid:

The ships that first are beach'd along by the shore
Let us drag to the water and launch on the bright salt sea,
Anchoring them with stones far out from the land,
Till night the divine shall come—if even by night
The Trojans will cease from fighting; and then may we drag
The rest of the vessels down to the shore. For to me,
To flee from disaster, even by night, is no shame;
Better to flee from disaster than stay and be caught!

With an angry glance then address'd him wily Odysseus:
'What a speech, Atrides, the fence of thy teeth has let slip!
Ill-fated man, some other, inglorious host
Thou shouldst be lord of, and not be king over us,
Whom Zeus has granted to ravel, from youth until age,
The skein of dolorous war, till each of us die.
Dost thou really think to leave wide-way'd Troy behind,
For the sake of which we suffer so much and so long?
Hold thy peace, for fear some man of the Argives
Should hear thy speech, a speech that no one at all
Should suffer to slip from his mouth, no man that can speak
Right counsel out of his heart, no sceptred lord
Whose word full many a throng of people obeys
As thou among the hosts of Achaea art king.
Utterly now do I scorn the counsel thou giv'st,
Bidding us drag our well-bench'd ships to the sea,
With war and battle about us, that more than before
The Trojans may have their desire, that stand even now
Victorious, and upon us destruction may fall.
No more will the Argives keep fighting, the ships once dragg'd
To the salt sea, but will ever be glancing behind
And stealing away from the slaughter; and then indeed
Thy counsel shall prove our bane, O marshal of hosts.'
To him Agamemnon made answer, the leader of men:
'Thou hast stung my heart with thy bitter chiding, Odysseus;
Yet I bid not the sons of Achaea against their will
To drag the well-bench'd vessels down to the sea.
O that someone now would give better counsel than mine!
Young man or old, his speech would be welcome to me.'

Then Diomed, fam'd for the war-cry, spake to them thus:
'He is near, that man; we shall not seek him for long,
If so ye are willing to hear me, nor take it amiss
And grudge me speech, who in years am the youngest man here.
Yet I, also, make boast of a goodly sire,
Tydeus, buried in Thebes 'neath a barrow of earth.
For to Portheus once were there born three glorious sons,

Who in Pleuron had their abode and in Calydon's crags—
Agrios and Melas, the third being Oeneus the knight,
My father's sire, whose valour was greater than theirs.
There was his home, but my father wander'd to Argos
And settled there; so Zeus and the other gods will'd.
A bride he took from Adrastus' daughters, and dwelt
In a richly-furnish'd house. Many cornfields were his
And many an orchard of trees about him there was
And sheep a-plenty; nor in all Achaea was found
His equal at casting the spear. Now all that I say
Ye must have heard, whether truth I tell your or no.
Ye shall not therefore call me coward and weak
And so despise whatever fitly I rede.
Come, hurt though we be, let us fight, since needs we must;
Hereafter may we hold us aloof from the fray,
Clear of the darts, lest any take wound upon wound;
But the rest we will urge and send to the fight, that till now
Have giv'n way to their grievance and fight not, standing aloof.'

So spake he, and they right heartily heard and obey'd;
And the king of men, Agamemnon, led as they went.
Now the fam'd Shaker of Earth not vainly kept watch
But went beside them, in guise of an aged man;
And, taking the hand of Atreus' son, Agamemnon,
His right hand, in winged words to him spake:
'Atrides, now must the baneful heart of Achilles
Be glad in his breast, as he looks on the slaughter and rout
Of the Argive host, for of wisdom he has not a grain.
Even so may he perish alike, and a god bring him low.
But with thee are the blessed Gods not utterly wroth,
Even yet, methinks, shall the Trojan rulers and guides
Raise the dust of the plain, and thyself shalt behold
As they flee to the city back from the ships and the huts.'
So saying, he gave a great shout, as he sped o'er the plain.
Loud as nine thousand, ten thousand men shout in the fray
When they join in the strife of the War-god, such was the shout
That the lord, the Shaker of Earth, sent forth from his breast;
And into the heart of every man of the Argives
Great valour he put, to war and to fight without cease.

Now golden-thron'd Hera stood on a peak of Olympus
And saw him from there; and at once she knew who it was,
Who busied himself in the fray that gives glory to men—
Her brother and brother of Zeus; and glad was her heart.
Zeus, too, she beheld where he sat on the loftiest peak
Of watery Ida, and hateful was he to her heart.

Then queenly Hera, the soft-ey'd, thought in herself
How to snare the mind of Zeus that beareth the shield.
And this was the counsel that seem'd to her mind the best,
To go to Ida, adorn'd with fairest attire,
If haply he might desire to sleep at her side
And embrace her body in love, while she might pour out
On his eyelids and crafty mind sweet slumber and warm.
Then forth to her chamber she went, that her dear son Hephae-
stus

Had fashion'd for her, to the doorposts fitting strong doors
With a secret bolt, that none other God might go in.
And entering in, she clos'd the glittering doors.
With ambrosia first her lovely body she cleans'd
From every stain and with oil of the olive anneal'd,
Soft and ambrosial oil and fragrant of scent;
If shaken it were in the bronze-floor'd palace of Zeus,
Even so to heaven and earth would the scent of it reach.
With this she anneal'd her lovely body, and comb'd
Her hair, plaiting the shining locks with her hands,
The fair and immortal locks that stream'd from her head.
Then about her she put an ambrosial robe, that Athena
Had skilfully wrought her, with intricate broidery rich;
She fasten'd it over her breast with brooches of gold
And put on a girdle with tassels a hundred array'd;
In her pierc'd ears she set earrings, three drops in a cluster,
And great was the beauty that shone and sparkled therefrom.
Above all the bright goddess cover'd herself with a veil
New-woven and fair, in whiteness like to the sun;
And beneath her shining feet fair sandals she bound.

Now when the whole of her tiring was over and done,
Coming forth from her chamber, she call'd Aphrodite to her
Apart from the rest of the Gods, and spake to her thus:
'Dear child, wilt thou do my bidding in aught that I say
Or wilt thou refuse, with rancour still in thy heart
Because thou to the Trojans, while I to the Argives lend aid?'
Then answer made Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus:
'O Hera, daughter of Cronos, Goddess and Queen,
Speak thou thy mind; thy hest will I gladly fulfil,
If fulfil it I can, if it be not impossible.'
With guileful mind then spake to her Hera the queen:
'Now give me Love and Desire, wherewith thou art wont
All mortal men and immortal Gods to subdue.
For I go to visit the bounds of all-bountiful earth,
Mother Tethys, and Ocean, begetter of all of the Gods;

In their halls they lovingly nurs'd me and brought me up
When they took me from Rhea, the time that far-seeing Zeus
Thrust Cronos down beneath Earth and the fruitless sea.
Them will I visit and end their unceasing strife;
For long is the time since last they were partners in love,
Living apart since anger enter'd their hearts.
If I by speaking might move the hearts of these twain
And bring them back to be partners once more in love,
They would hold me ever in honour and call me dear.'

Then answer'd again Aphrodite, Lady of Laughter:
'Thy hest I cannot refuse, nor would it be right,
For thou tak'st thy sleep in the arms of mightiest Zeus.'
So saying, she loos'd from her bosom the girdle she wore,
Cunningly wrought and broider'd with many a charm;
There was Love there, and Desire and amorous talk
That steals the wits even of them that are wise.
This she laid in her hands and spake to her thus:
'Take in thy bosom this girdle, cunningly-wrought,
Wherein all things are depicted; I tell thee now
Thou shalt not come back from thy quest thy wish unfulfill'd,
Whatever it be in thy heart that has thy desire.'
So spake she, and smiled then Hera the soft-eye'd queen
And, smiling, the girdle safe in her bosom she laid.
Now the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite, went to her house,
But Hera, leaving the peak of Olympus, sped down;
By Pieria went she and lovely Emathia's land;
O'er the snow-capp'd hills of the horsemen of Thrace did she fly,
O'er the topmost peaks, nor graz'd she the ground with her feet;
From Athos she far'd across the billowing sea
And to Lemnos, the city of godlike Thoas, she came.
There she fell in with Sleep, own brother to Death;
And she clasp'd his hand in her own and spake to him thus:
'O Sleep, lord of all Gods and lord of all men,
If ever thou gavest ear to my word, so now
Hearken to me; I will owe thee thanks evermore.
Lull me to sleep the bright eyes of Zeus 'neath his brows
So soon as ever I lie beside him in love.
Gifts will I give thee, a throne of gold that shall last
For endless time; my son, Hephaestus the lame,
Shall make it with skill, and a footstool fashion beneath,
For thy shining feet to rest on whenever thou drink'st.'
The sweet Sleep answer return'd and spake to her thus:
'O Hera, daughter of Cronos, Goddess and Queen,
Any other one of the gods that live evermore

With ease could I lull to sleep, were it even the streams
Of the river Ocean, father and sire of them all;
But to Zeus, whom Cronos begat, would I never draw near
Nor lull him to slumber, unless himself should command;
Ere this have I learn'd a lesson from one of thy hests,
The day that the proud son of Zeus from Ilios sail'd,
Leaving the Trojan city in ruins behind.
'Twas then I cozen'd the mind of shield-bearing Zeus,
Being spread in sweetness about him, and thou in thy heart
Didst plot sore woe for his son, when over the deep
Thou didst excite the blasts of the furious winds,
And, that being done, didst carry him far from his friends
To populous Cos. Now Zeus, on awaking, was wroth,
And flung the Gods from side to side of his palace,
Hither and thither. 'Twas me above all that he sought,
Would have hurl'd me from heaven to perish under the sea,
Had Night not sav'd me, that sways men and gods alike.
To her did I flee, and besought her, and Zeus held his hand,
For all he was wroth; he fear'd to displease swift Night.
And now thou sett'st me again an impossible task.'

Then thus there spake to him Hera, the soft-eyed queen:
'Sleep, why keepest thou ever these things in mind?
Thinkest thou that far-seeing Zeus will give aid to the Trojans
As for Heracles once he was wrathful, his very own son?
Come, please me, and one of the Graces, lovely and young,
Will I give thee to wed, to be call'd the wife of thy heart—
Pasithea, whom thou hast long'd for the whole of thy life.'
So spake she, and Sleep rejoic'd and answer'd her thus:
'Come, swear to me now by the sacred waters of Styx;
With one of thy hands lay hold of the bounteous earth,
With the other the shimmering sea; that between us twain
All the Gods may be witness, who dwell with Cronos below,
Thou wilt give me one of the Graces, lovely and young,
Pasithea, whom I have long'd for the whole of my life.'
So spake he, and white-arm'd Hera fail'd not to hear
But sware as he bade her, calling on all of the Gods
Whose dwelling is under Tartarus, Titans by name.
But when she had sworn and brought her oath to an end,
From the cities of Lemnos and Imbos the pair of them went
Enshrouded in mist, and speedily press'd on their way.
To the mother of wild things, watery Ida, they came,
To Lectum, and, leaving the sea, fared over the land,
And the peaks of the forest were shaken beneath their tread.
There hated Sleep, ere the eyes of Zeus should behold him,

And climb'd up a pine-tree, a pine so tall that in Ida
None taller grew, and it rose through the mist to the sky.
On it he perch'd, close-hidden by pine-tree boughs,
In the guise of a bird that shrilly sings in the hills,
Which Gods call Chalcis and men the hawk of the night.
Now Hera to topmost Gargarus swiftly drew near,
The highest point of Ida; and Zeus, who gathers
The clouds together, beheld her; and when he beheld,
Then love enshrouded his mind, for all it was wise,
Such love as when first they were bedded together in bliss,
Sharing delight, with their parents dear unaware.
And he stood before her and spake, and these were his words:
'Hera, what long'st thou for, coming down thus from Olympus?
No horses are by thee, nor chariot whereon thou mightst ride.'

Then with guile in her mind there spake to him Hera the queen:
'I am going to visit the bounds of all-bountiful earth,
Mother Tethys, and Ocean, begetter of all of the Gods;
In their halls they lovingly nurs'd me and brought me up.
Them will I visit and end their unceasing strife;
For long is the time since last they were partners in love,
Living apart since anger enter'd their hearts.
At the foot of watery Ida my horses stand,
That shall bear me over the wet and over the dry.
For thy sake it is I am come down here from Olympus,
For fear lest after thou mightest be wroth, if in silence
To the house of deep-flowing Ocean I took my way.'
Then in answer to her spake Zeus that gathers the clouds:
'Thou canst go there later, Hera; but now let us twain
On the bed of love together take our delight;
For never desire for goddess or mortal woman
So flooded the heart in my breast as masters me now,
No, not when I lov'd the wife of Ixion, whose son
Pirithöus was, in counsel the peer of the Gods;
Nor her who Perseus bare, of all warriors chief,
Acrisius' daughter Danae, fair of ankle;
Nor the daughter of far-fam'd Phoenix, that bare unto me
Minos and eke Rhadamanthus, like to a God;
Nor yet Alcmena in Thebes, nor Semele fair,
Though Semele bare Dionysus, of mortals the joy,
And Alcmena brought forth Heracles, doughty of heart;
Nor ever Demeter lov'd I, the fair-tressed queen,
Nor glorious Leto, nor even thine own dear self,
As now I love and with sweet desire am enthrall'd.'

Then with guile in her mind thus spake to him Hera the queen:

'Most dread son of Cronos, what word is this thou hast said!
If now thou desirest to lie on the couch of love
Upon Ida's peaks, where all is plain to be seen,
How would it be, should one of the Gods ever-living
Spy on us twain as we sleep, and, going his way,
Tell the rest of the Gods? I could not rise from that couch
And go again to thy house, for shameful it were.
But if thou wilt and pleasing it is to thy heart,
Thou hast a chamber thy dear son fashion'd for thee,
Hephaestus, upon the doorposts fitting strong doors.
There let us go and lie down, since the bed thou desir'st.'
Then in answer to her spake Zeus that gathers the clouds:
'Have no fear any God or man shall behold
Our sleep, Hera; in such a cloud will I wrap thee,
A cloud of gold, not even the Sun's very self
Could behold us twain, though his sight be keenest of all.'
And Cronos' son, as he spake, took his wife in his arms,
And the gracious earth below them bare grass newly-sprung,
Crocus and dew dappled lotus and hyacinth, soft
And thickly growing, which rais'd them up in the air;
There lay they, the twain, all veil'd with a fair golden cloud,
Wherefrom there shower'd drops of glittering dew.
Thus quietly slumber'd the Father on Gargarus' height,
In the thrall of sleep and of love, with his wife in his arms.

But sweet Sleep started to run to the ships of the Argives,
To bring his news to the Holder and Shaker of Earth.
And standing beside him, in winged words he address'd him:
'Eagerly now, Poseidon, the Danaans aid,
And grant them renown, for a little space though it be;
Over Zeus have I spread soft slumber, and he is asleep,
Beguil'd by Hera to lie on the couch of love.'
So spake he, and went to the famous tribes of mankind,
Urging Poseidon yet more to give aid to the Argives.
At once he leap'd forth 'mid the foremost, crying aloud:
'Must we yield the victory once more, ye Argives, to Hector,
That the son of Priam may take the ships and win glory?
So says he and makes his boast it shall be, for Achilles
By the hollow ships remains with rancour at heart.
But him we shall not regret overmuch, if the rest
Bestir ourselves to give aid, each man to the rest.
But come, let us all obey and do as I bid.
The shields that in all the host are broadest and best
Let us take, and with shining helmets cover our heads;
In our hands let us grasp the longest spears that there be,

And so set forth; myself will be leader; not long
Shall Priam's son Hector, for all his fury, abide.
And he that can fight like a man, and bears on his shoulder
But little a shield, to a punier man than himself
Let him give it, equipping himself with one that is large.'

So spake he, and gladly they heard him and, hearing, obey'd.
And the Kings themselves made ready, hurt as they were,
Diomed, Odysseus, and Atreus' son, Agamemnon.
They went through the host, exchanging weapons of war;
With goodly armour the goodly warrior dress'd him,
And gave to meaner fighters the meaner arms.
And then, when in glittering bronze they had clothed themselves,

They went forth, their leader Poseidon, the Shaker of Earth;
In his mighty hand he bare his terrible sword,
Lengthy of edge and like as the lightning is;
Thereon may no man dare in the dreadful fray
To lay his hand, but terror keeps all men aloof.
On the other side the Trojans glorious Hector
Was ranging in order; and then in veriest sooth
Did they strain between them the cords of terrible war,
Poseidon, sable of locks, and glorious Hector,
To the Trojans one bearing help, to the Argives the other.
And the sea wash'd up to the huts and ships of the Argives,
As with a resounding crash the armies engag'd.
Not louder thunders the wave of the sea on the shore,
Driven up from the deep by the North Wind's furious blast;
Not louder the roar of fire that blazes away
In a mountain vale, when it leaps to set woodland aflame;
Not louder the wind in the topmost boughs of the oaks
Makes moan—the wind that loudest howls in its rage—
As then was the cry of Achaeans and Trojans, who shouted
A terrible shout as each on the other side leap'd.
At Ajax did glorious Hector first cast his spear,
As fully he faced him; nor went he wide of the mark,
For he smote where across his breast two baldrics were
stretch'd,

One for his silver-knobb'd sword and one for his shield,
And they guarded the delicate flesh. But Hector was wroth,
For the fleeting shaft had vainly flown from his hand,
And back to his comrades he shrank, avoiding his fate.
But back as he went, the great Telamonian Ajax
With a boulder smote him, that roll'd to their feet as they
fought,

For many there were, that were us'd as props for the ships.
One of these he lifted on high and near to the neck,
Over his shield-rim he Hector smote on the chest;
And the blow made him reel like a top, and he stagger'd around.
Then even as, stricken by Zeus, there falls an oak,
Though deep its roots, and arises the dreadful reek
Of sulphur, then courage forsakes the man who stands by,
Gazing thereon, for dread is the levin of Zeus;
So fell the mighty Hector down in the dust.
And the spear dropp'd out of his hand, but his shield remain'd
firm

And his helm, and about him his chas'd bronze armour rang out.
Then, mightily shouting, the sons of Achaea ran up,
Hoping to drag him away; but never a one
Could pierce him or smite him; for long ere that could be done,
Stepp'd forward to guard him the bravest men in the host,
Aeneas for one, Polydamas, goodly Agenor,
Sarpedon the Lycian leader and peerless Glaucus;
Of the rest not a man was unheedful of him, but in front
They held their round shields before him; and up in their arms
His comrades lifted him, bearing him forth from the fray
Till he came to where, at the back of the fighting and struggle
His swift horses stood waiting for him, with the charioteer
And his chariot richly adorn'd; so they bare him away,
Heavily groaning, along the way to the town.
But when to the ford of the fair-flowing river they came,
Of eddying Xanthus, whom Zeus immortal begat,
There did they lift him down, and on him they pour'd
Water. He came to himself and glanc'd up with his eyes,
And, resting upon his knees, he brought up dark blood,
Then back he sank to the ground, and over his eyes
Dark night came down, for the wound still master'd his soul.

But when the Achaeans saw Hector carried away,
The more did they leap on the Trojans, slaughter at heart.
First above all swift Ajax, the son of Öileus,
With a leap at him, Satnius smote with his pointed spear;
Son of Enops he was, by a peerless Naiad borne
When Enops graz'd kine by the banks of the Satnioeis.
To him did the spear-doughty son of Öileus draw near
And smote at his side; and backward he fell, and about him
Trojans and Argives in terrible conflict were join'd.
Then came to his aid Polydamas, wielding a spear,
Panthöus' son; and on the right shoulder he smote
Areilycus' son, Prothoenor; the mighty spear

Kept straight on its way through his shoulder; down in the dust
Prothoenor fell, and clutch'd the earth with his palm.
Then with terrible vaunting Polydamas shouted aloud:
'Once more from the mighty hand of the great-soul'd son
Of Panthöus—not vainly, I reckon—has leap'd the spear;
In the flesh of an Argive it lodges, and leaning on it
As a staff, shall he go to the dwelling of Hades beneath.'
So spake he; his boast on the host of Achaea brought grief;
Above all did he stir the soul of wise-hearted Ajax,
Telamon's son, for near him Prothoenor had fallen.
As the other drew back, with his shining spear he let fly;
Polydamas, leaping aside, death's darkness avoided,
But Archelochus, son of Antenor, was caught by the spear,
For the Gods will'd he should die; he was hit by the spear
Where the head is join'd to the neck, at the top of the spine,
On the highest joint, and both the sinews cut through;
And his head and his mouth and his nose far sooner the ground
Touch'd as he fell to earth, than his legs and his knees.

Then to peerless Polydamas Ajax shouted in turn:
'Bethink thee, Polydamas, now and tell me the truth;
Was not this man worth slaying to avenge Prothoenor?
Not a common warrior he seems nor of common stock,
But a brother, belike, of Antenor, tamer of horses,
Or a son, for in feature most like unto him is he.'
He knew he spake truth, and grief seiz'd the hearts of the
Trojans.

Then Acamas spear'd Boeotian Promachus through,
Bestriding his brother's corpse, which Promachus sought
To drag away from beneath him, holding the feet.
Then with terrible vaunting Acamas shouted aloud:
'Ye Argives that trust in the bow and threaten all day,
Not for us alone, I say, shall be wailing and woe;
Ye too shall be slain, in the selfsame manner as we.
Mark well how sleeps your Promachus, brought to the ground
By my spear, that the death of my brother not long may remain
Unaveng'd; this it is for which a warrior prays,
That a kinsman be left in his halls to avenge his defeat.'
So spake he; his boast on the sons of Achaea brought grief;
Above all wise-hearted Peneleos' soul did he stir.
At Acamas charg'd he; but he withstood not the lunge
Of the Prince Peneleos. The latter Ilioneus smote,
The son of Phorbas, of many cattle the lord;
Him more than all Trojans did Hermes love and enrich,
And to him his wife no child but Ilioneus bare.

Him then did Peneleos smite at the roots of the eye,
Under the brow, displacing the eyeball; the shaft
Went right through the eye, and clean through the nape of the
neck,

And, stretching out both his hands, he sank to the ground.
But Peneleos, taking his sword full sharp from its sheath,
Brought it down on the neck and clove to the ground
The head with the helm still on; and still in the eye
Was the mighty spear. Like a poppy-head lifting it up,
He shew'd the head to the Trojans and vauntingly spake:
'Ye Trojans, tell them from me—the dear mother and sire
Of Ilioneus here—to bewail their son in their halls;
For the wife of Promachus, son of Algenor, shall never
Be glad at the coming home of her husband dear,
When we lads of Achaea from Troy return with our ships.'

So spake he, and trembling seiz'd the limbs of them all,
And each man look'd for a way to escape from his doom.
Tell me the name, ye Muses that dwell on Olympus,
Of the man who first of the Argives carried away
Blood-dabbled spoils, when the glorious Shaker of Earth
Had sway'd the battle for them. Now, first there was Ajax,
Telamon's son; he Hyrtius smote, the son
Of Gyrtius, leader of stout-hearted Mysian men;
By Antilochus' hand were Phalces and Mermerus stripp'd;
Meriones slew Hippotion, Morys as well,
And Teucer brought low Periphetes and Prothoön too;
Then Atrides smote Hyperenor, shepherd of men,
Piercing his side; and the bronze, as it clove its way through,
Tore his entrails out, and his soul through the breach of the
wound

Fled speeding away, and darkness enshrouded his eyes.
But Öileus' son, swift Ajax, slaughter'd the most;
For when Zeus had sent his terror, peer had he none
To follow, with speed in his feet, the retreating foe.

Zeus, being roused from sleep, is enraged and bids Apollo to support the Trojan cause by renewing the strength of Hector. Fighting beside the ships.

BUT when in their flight the Trojans had made their way
 Across palisade and trench, and many been hurt
 At the hands of the Danaan men, they came to a halt
 By the chariots, blenching with dread and stricken with fear,
 And there they stay'd. But Zeus on the crests of Ida
 Awoke beside golden-thron'd Hera; then up he sprang
 And, standing, he saw the Trojans and eke the Achaeans,
 The ones in flight, the others, the people of Argos,
 Pressing on from behind, and the lord Poseidon among them.
 And Hector he saw, with his comrades seated around
 As he lay on the plain there, painfully gasping for breath,
 And bringing up blood and wandering far in his mind,
 For not by the weakest Achaean had he been hurt.
 And seeing him thus, the Father of Gods and of men
 Had pity, and, wrath in his gaze, to Hera he spake:
 'Thy cunning it is, O stubborn-spirited Hera,
 That has made the noble Hector cease from the fray
 And fill'd the people with terror. Nay, but I know not
 Whether thou shalt not be the first to garner the fruits
 Of thy cruel mischief, and I chastise thee with stripes.
 Dost thou forget how once I hung thee on high,
 Two anvils weighting thy feet, and about thy wrists
 I clasp'd a fetter of gold that no-one might break?
 And thou didst hang in the clouds and the bright upper air
 And throughout the breadth of Olympus the Gods were wroth,
 Yet none might stand beside thee and set thee free;
 But whomsoever I caught there, him would I seize
 And hurl from the threshold until he came to the earth,
 His strength all lost. Yet even so was my heart
 Not eas'd of its endless grieving for Heracles.
 Him, with the North Wind's help, suborning his blasts,
 Thou didst send on the barren sea, plotting evil at heart,
 And to peopled Cos thereafter didst bear him away.
 Thence did I save him, when woe full much he had borne,
 Bringing him back to Argos, where horses are graz'd.

Of this I remind thee, that thou may'st cease thy cajoling
And see how much they avail thee, thy love and thy couch
Where thou, coming forth from the Gods, didst beguile me to lie.'

So spake he, and shudder'd Hera, the soft-eyed queen;
And with winged words she address'd him, and thus she spake:
'Be Earth my witness and Heaven that stretches above,
And the falling water of Styx (which oath is the greatest
And darest yet that ever blessed Gods may swear):
By thine own most sacred head, by the couch of us twain,
Our wedding couch—such an oath would I never forswear—
Through no will of mine does Poseidon, the Shaker of Earth,
Vex the Trojans and Hector, but succours their foes.
Nay, but his own spirit urges him on;

He has seen the Trojans hard-press'd by the ships, and had pity;
Yet would I counsel him thither to go, where thou,
O lord of the dark storm-cloud, may'st lead him on.'

So spake she, and smiled the Father of Gods and of men,
And answer he made and with winged words to her spake:
'If thou hereafter, O Hera, my soft-eyed queen,
Shouldst be like-minded as I am, among the Immortals
When thou art seated, Poseidon, though other his will,
Straightway would bend his mind to suit thy heart and mine.
But if thou art speaking frankly and telling the truth,
Go now to the tribes of the Gods, and do thou bid
Iris come hither, and Apollo, the archer renown'd,
That she may go through the host of the bronze-mail'd

Achaean

And bid the lord Poseidon to cease from war
And go back home to his house; but let Phoebus Apollo
Rouse Hector to fight and breathe new strength into him
And make him forget the anguish that frets now his heart;
Once more let him rout the Achaeans, arousing in them
A craven terror. Aye, let them fall as they flee
'Mid the well-bench'd ships of Achilles, Peleus' son;
His comrade Patroclus he shall send forth; but him
Shall glorious Hector slay with the might of his spear
Before the face of Ilios, after himself
Has done to death full many another youth,
Among their number my son, the goodly Sarpedon.
In rage for Patroclus shall goodly Achilles slay Hector,
And from that time forth will I make the Trojans be driven
Back evermore from the ships, until the Achaeans
By Athena's counsel shall high-built Ilios take.
Till then I am angry still, and no other Immortal

Will I suffer to lend his aid to the Danaans here
Until the desire of Peleus' son be fulfill'd,
As I promis'd of yore and nodding gave my assent
On the day when divine Thetis, embracing my knees,
Besought me to honour Achilles, the sacker of towns.'

So spake he, and Hera, the white-arm'd Goddess, obey'd,
Leaving the mountains of Ida for lofty Olympus.
And as fleetly darts the mind of a man that has pass'd
To far countries and thinks to himself in his heart,
'Oh to be here, or there!' with his mind full of thoughts;
So swiftly there sped in her eagerness Hera the Queen;
To lofty Olympus she came and into the presence
Of the Gods immortal, in Zeus' dwelling assembled;
And at sight of her, up they sprang and with welcoming cups
Greeted her; she, passing over the rest, took a cup
From fair-cheek'd Themis, for she was the first to run up
To meet her, and thus in wing'd words did she speak:
'Hera, why hast thou come? Thou lookest distraught;
Surely Cronion, thy husband, has made thee afraid.'
Then to her did Hera, the white-arm'd Goddess, reply:
'Divine Themis, question me not upon that;
That his spirit is proud and unbending, thou knowest thyself.
But do thou begin the feast that is shar'd alike
By the Gods, and thou amid the Immortals shalt hear
What manner of evil-doing Zeus has in mind.
Not to all, methinks, will it bring delight, whether Gods
Or men, if any still sit with joy at the feast.'
When thus she had spoken, the queenly Hera sate down,
And wroth were the Gods in the hall of Zeus; with her lips
She laugh'd, but her forehead above her lowering brows
Never clear'd, and, mov'd with anger, she spake to them all:
'Witless fools that we are, to be angry with Zeus!
Even now do we long to approach him and thwart his will
By word or by force; but he neither heeds us nor cares
As he sits aloof, for among the immortal Gods
In might and in strength he deems himself clearly the best.
Be ye therefore content with what evil he sends upon each—
Even now upon Ares, I fear me, sorrow is come,
For the man he lov'd best in battle is fallen, his son
Ascalaphus, he whom the mighty Ares claims as his own.'
So spake she, but Ares smote with the flat of his hand
His sturdy thighs and, wailing, spake to them thus:
'O ye that dwell on Olympus, blame me not now
If I make for the Danaan ships to avenge my son,

Though it be my fate by the levin of Zeus to be smitten
And lie with the dead amongst the blood and the dust.'
So spake he, and Terror and Rout commanded to yoke
His horses; himself his gleaming armour put on.
Then would anger and wrath more grievous and great
Have fallen out between the Immortals and Zeus
If Athena, in terror for all of the Gods, had not sped
Out through the porchway, leaving the throne where she sate,
And taken the shield from his shoulders, the helm from his
head;

She took from his mighty hand the spear of bronze
And, setting it down, rebuk'd the furious Ares:
'Wouldst seek thy death, thou madman? Truly, for naught
Hast thou ears for hearing—thy wits, thy sense is no more.
Hearest thou not the words of the white-arm'd Goddess,
Hera, who is come but now from Olympian Zeus?
Wouldst fill the measure of manifold evil thyself
And back to Olympus hie thee perforce in thy grief
And sow the seeds of woe full great for the rest?
For at once the high-hearted Trojans and the Achaeans
He will leave, and make for Olympus, to bring upon us
Trouble; each one will he seize, whether guilty or not.
So I bid thee now put away thy grief for thy son.
For many a better and stronger man than was he
Has been slain before now or will be hereafter; 'tis hard
To keep from destruction the race and offspring of men.'
With these words did she make savage Ares to sit on his throne.

But Hera call'd forth Apollo out of the hall,
With Iris, that is the go-between of the Gods;
And with wingéd words she address'd them, and thus did she
speak:

'Zeus bids the twain of you go with all speed towards Ida,
And when ye have come and look'd on the face of Zeus,
Whatever he bid or command you, that will ye do.'
So speaking, again the queenly Hera return'd
And sate on her throne; and the twain sped forth on their quest.
To the mother of wild things, watery Ida, they came,
And Zeus they found on the height of Gargarus seated,
Far-seeing Zeus, enwreath'd with a fragrant cloud.
They stood in the presence of him who gathers the clouds,
And he at sight of them wax'd not angry at heart,
For with speed they obey'd the words of the wife that he lov'd.
To Iris first did he speak, and wing'd were his words:
'Swift Iris, begone; to the lord Poseidon announce

All of these tidings, and see thou tell nothing false.
From warring and fighting bid him to cease, and to go
'Mid the tribes of the Gods, or into the shining sea.
And if my words he obeys not and recks not of them,
Let him think then in heart and in mind, lest, strong though
he be,

He dare not await my attack, for in might, I vow,
Far better am I and the elder by birth; yet of this
Is his heart not afraid, to claim himself equal with me,
With me, of whom even the rest of the Gods are in dread.'
So spake he, and Iris, the swift, the wind-footed, heard,
And from Ida's hills to sacred Ilios came.

As when from the clouds fleets snow or a storm of hail,
Icy hail, when the North-wind is blowing it on,
That is born in the bright upper air, even as swift
Swift Iris in eagerness sped; and nigher she drew
And spake to the glorious Shaker of Earth, and she said:
'A message for thee, O dark-hair'd Enfolder of Earth,
Hither I bring from Zeus who carries the shield.
From warring and fighting he bids thee cease, and to go
'Mid the tribes of the Gods, or into the shining sea.
And if his words thou obey not and reck not of them,
Himself, he threatens, will hither come to make war,
And pit his might against thine; and out of his hands
He bids thee escape, for in might far better is he,
So he vows, than thou, and the elder by birth; yet of this
Is thy heart not afraid, to claim thyself equal with him,
With him, of whom even the other Gods are in dread.'

Then in mighty anger the glorious Shaker of Earth
Spake to her: 'Fie on it, great though he be, he exceeds
Due bounds by his words, if against my will and by force
He will master me, me whose honour and his are alike;
For we are three brethren, the sons of Cronos by Rhea—
Zeus and myself and Hades, the lord of the dead.
Into three was the world divided, and each had his share;
I, when the lots were shaken, won the grey sea
For my lasting home, and Hades the darkness below,
While to Zeus fell the heaven, amid the clouds and the air;
But earth is still common to all, and lofty Olympus.
Therefore will I not walk as Zeus shall desire;
Strong though he be, let him keep to his third part in peace.
And let him not seek with the powerful might of his hands
To put fear into me, as if utterly craven I were;
'Twere better that he should threaten with terrible words

His sons and daughters, that he himself did beget,
For they, whatever he bids them, must hearken perforce.'
Then Iris the swift, the wind-footed, answer return'd:
'Is it thus, O Enfolder of Earth, O dark-hair'd one,
I must carry this harsh and unyielding answer to Zeus?
Or wilt thou not change? 'Tis a noble mind that relents;
And the Furies, thou know'st, ever succour an elder brother.'
Then again made answer Poseidon, the Shaker of Earth:
'Full meetly, O Lady Iris, thy words thou hast said;
'Tis an excellent thing when a messenger speaks with discretion.
Yet dread is the grief that enters my heart and my soul
When a man desires with railing words to upbraid
One who is equal in lot and has portion alike.
Nevertheless, for this time resentful I yield;
Yet another thing will I say and vow in my wrath:
If Zeus, despite me and Athena, driver of spoil,
And despite the lord Hephaestus and Hera and Hermes,
Shall high-built Ilios spare, and shall not desire
To lay it waste, nor to give great might to the Argives,
Let him know that between us twain shall be wrath unassuag'd.'
So saying, the Shaker of Earth left the host of the Argives
Though much they regretted his going, and plung'd in the sea.

Then Zeus that gathers the clouds Apollo address'd:
'Go now, dear Phoebus, to Hector, whose arms are of bronze,
For now the Enfolder and Shaker of Earth is away
In the bright sea, to avoid our uttermost wrath;
For others else had learn'd of our strife, even they
Who dwell with Cronos, the Gods of the underworld.
But better it was, far better, for him and for me,
That, ere that, he gave in to my hands, resentful at heart;
For not without sweat would the strife have come to an end.
But take thou my tassell'd shield in thy hands, and above
The Argive warriors shake it, to strike them with fear.
Be glorious Hector thy charge, thou that shootest afar;
Do thou rouse in him mighty courage, until the Achaeans
Shall come in their flight to their ships and the Hellespont.
Thereafter both words and deeds myself will devise
That the Argives again may have some rest from their toil.'
So spake he; Apollo his father's bidding obey'd,
Going down from Ida's hills, like the slayer of doves,
The fleeting falcon, swiftest of all that have wings.
And goodly Hector, the son of wise-hearted Priam,
He found sitting up, no longer prone on the ground,
His senses newly return'd to him; and he knew

His comrades gather'd around; for the gasping and sweat
Had ceas'd; so will'd it Zeus who carries the shield.
And Apollo, that works from afar, drawing night to him, said:
'Why, son of Priam, Hector, apart from the rest
Dost thou sit here aswoon? Is trouble come upon thee?
Then in his weakness the bright-plum'd Hector replied:
'What God art thou, lord, to question me face to face?
Knowest thou not that beside the Achæan ships
As I slaughter'd his comrades, Ajax, good at the war-cry,
With a stone that he cast at my chest put an end to my might?
I deem'd in truth that the dead and the dwelling of Hades
I should see this day, having gasp'd the life of me forth.'
Then the lord Apollo, that words from afar, spake again:
'Cheerly now! So mighty a helper has Zeus
Sent forth from Ida to stand at thy side and give aid—
Myself, Phoebus Apollo, I that of old
With my golden sword guard thee and the citadel steep.
But come now, thy many charioteers do thou bid
Drive their swift horses up to the hollow ships,
And I will go on and make the path of the horses
Smooth all the way, and put the Achæans to flight.'

At these words, with great valour the shepherd of men was
inspir'd;

Like a stall'd horse that, fed to the full at his manger,
Breaks loose from his halter, stampeding over the plain,
Glad at heart, for his wont is to bathe in the fair-flowing river;
High does he hold his head, and about him his mane
On his shoulders streams out; in his glory he trusts; and his knees
Bear him fleetly away to the haunts and pastures of mares:
Even as swiftly plied Hector his feet and his knees,
Urging on his charioteers, at the voice of the God.
And as when a wild goat or a horned stag is pursued
By a pack of hounds and men of the countryside,
But the sheer face of a rock, or the shadowy copse
Saves it from them, never fated their quarry to find;
And then at sound of their shouting a bearded lion
Appears on the path and puts the keen huntsmen to flight:
Even so did the Argives awhile follow ever in throngs,
Thrusting with swords and with lances double of edge;
But when they saw Hector inspecting the ranks of his men,
They fear'd, and the hearts of all men sank to their feet.
Then spake there among them Thoas, the son of Andraemon,
Far the best of all the Aetolians, skill'd with the spear,
In hand-to-hand fighting excellent, in the assembly

With few his peer when the young men strove in debate.
With noble intent he thus harangu'd them and spake:
'Behold, great is the marvel I see with mine eyes—
One that has 'scaped from death and risen again,
Hector. Now truly the heart of each of us hop'd
He was slain at the hands of Ajax, Telamon's son.
But one of the Gods has deliver'd and rescu'd again
This Hector, who many an Argive limb has unstrung,
As again, methinks, he shall do; for loud-thundering Zeus
Wills him to stand thus forth as a champion keen.
But come, let us all obey and do as I bid;
Back to the ships let us bid the throng to return,
But as for ourselves, that avow us the pick of the host,
Let us make a stand and meet with him face to face,
Thrusting him back with our spears; and, keen though he be,
He will fear in his heart to enter the Danaan throng.'

So spake he, and gladly they heard his words and obey'd.
And those under lord Idomeneus, those under Ajax
And Teucer and Meriones and Meges, the peer
Of Ares, summon'd the pick of the men and made ready
For the fight with the Trojans and Hector, face to face;
But the throng behind them return'd to the ships of the Argives.
Then closely the Trojans press'd forward, with Hector in front,
Striding along; and before him went Phoebus Apollo,
His shoulders girdled with mist, and he bare the dread shield,
Fearful and fringed and shining to see, that the smith
Hephaestus gave Zeus to carry for making men fear;
With this in his hands did Apollo lead the host on.
Closely the Argives awaited them; shrilly there rose
The war-cry on either side; and forth from the bow-string
The arrows leap'd, and spears from the hands of the bold;
Some lodg'd in the flesh of young men swift in the fray,
But many, before they might reach the white flesh, midway
Stuck fast in the ground, though they long'd to be glutted with
flesh.

While Phoebus Apollo the shield in his hands held still,
The weapons of either side found a mark, and men fell;
But when the swift-hors'd Danaans full in the face
He look'd, and, shaking the shield, himself gave a cry,
Their hearts grew faint in their breasts, their might they forgot.
As when in the darkness of night-time a great flock of sheep
Or a herd of kine are chas'd headlong by two wild beasts
That have suddenly come when never a herdsman is by;
So fear'd the Achaeans and falter'd, for in them Apollo

His terror had set, giving praise to the Trojans and Hector.
Then man slew man as the fighting grew random; by Hector
Was Stichius fell'd, and likewise Arcesilaus,
The latter a chief of the bronze-mail'd Boeotian host,
And the former a faithful comrade of great-soul'd Menestheus;
By Aeneas were Medon and likewise Iasus slain;
A bastard son of Öileus, like to the Gods,
Was Medon, and brother of Ajax; but far from his home
In the land of Phylace he dwelt, having slain a man
Eriopis his stepmother's kin, that was wife to Öileus;
An Athenian captain Iasus was; he was call'd
The son of Sphelus, Bucolus' son. And Mecisteus
Was slain by Polydamas, and by Polites Echius
In the first encounter, while goodly Agenor slew Clonius.
At the base of the shoulder did Paris Deiochus smite
As he fled through the vanguard, cutting him down from
behind,
And driving the bronze right through him. Now while from
the dead

They were stripping the armour, the Argives were flinging
themselves

Into the delved trench and their own palisade,
Fleeing hither and thither and forc'd to the rear of their wall.
And Hector call'd to the Trojans, shouting aloud:
'Charge at the ships; let be the blood-spatter'd spoils.
And whomso I mark on the far side, away from the ships,
Then and there will I sentence to death, and no portion of fire
Shall his kinsmen and kinswomen give him when he shall be dead,
But dogs shall rend him in front of this city of ours.'

So saying, he brought down his arm and lash'd on the horses,
And call'd down the ranks to the Trojans, who level with his
Drave the horses that drew their chariots, shouting aloud
With a wondrous noise; and in front of them Phoebus Apollo
The banks of the deep-dug trench kick'd easily down
And cast them into the midst, so making a causeway
Both long and broad, and as far as a spear is thrown
When a man lets fly with it, making assay of his might.
Along it they pour'd in order, Apollo before them
Bearing the glorious shield; he knock'd down with ease
The Achæan wall, as a boy by the sea scatters sand,
First, in his childish way, making playthings of it
Then amusing himself as he wrecks them with hands or with feet;
So thou, O Phoebus, lord of the bow, the long toil
And work of the Argives didst wreck and put them to flight.

So the Danaans stay'd and halted beside their ships,
And calling one on the other, they lifted their hands
To all of the Gods and sorely pray'd every man;
And chiefly Gerenian Nestor, the Argive Warden,
Made prayer, stretching his hands to the starlit sky:
'Father Zeus, if one of us men from the cornfields of Argos
Ever burn'd to thy name fat thighs of a ram or a bull,
Praying to return, and thou gavest assent with a nod,
Remember it now, O Olympian, save us from doom
And let not the Argives be vanquish'd thus by the Trojans.'
Thus he pray'd, and Zeus the counsellor thunder'd aloud,
As he heard the prayer of Neleus' aged son.

But the Trojans, hearing the thunder of shield-bearing Zeus,
In the lust of battle leap'd on the Argives the more.
As when a great wave of the wide and stretching sea
Comes sweeping over the sides of a ship, driven on
By the wind, that chiefly makes the billows to swell:
So, mightily shouting, the Trojans leap'd over the wall
And, driving their horses in, gave fight by the sterns.
Close-lock'd they struggled, the Trojans from chariots smote
With two-edg'd spears, the Achaeans aloft on the decks
Of their black-hued ships, to which they had clamber'd up,
With great long jointed pikes, whose tips were of bronze,
That lay ready to hand on the ships for battle at sea.
Now Patroclus, so long as Achaeans and Trojans were fighting
Afar from the swift-going ships and round by the wall,
In the hut of the kindly-hearted Eurypylus sat
And cheer'd him with talk and spread on his grievous wound
Salves to assuage the darksome pangs of his hurt.
But when he caught sight of the Trojans rushing the wall
While the Argive host was shouting and turning in flight,
He groan'd and smote his thighs with the flat of his hand,
And he wail'd aloud, and this was the word that he said:
'No more can I stay with thee, Eurypylus, sore
Though be thy need, for a mighty struggle is here.
As for thee, let thy squire bring thee solace, but I to Achilles
Will hasten away, to spur him on to the fight.
Who knows but that, heaven assisting, his soul I may rouse
By persuading him? A comrade's persuasion is good.'
While yet he was speaking his feet bore him on; but the Argives
Firmly awaited the Trojan onslaught, but yet
Could not thrust them back from the ships, though fewer they
were,

Nor yet could the Trojans break the Danaan ranks

And make a way for themselves 'mid the huts and the ships.
As a carpenter's line makes straight the baulks of a ship
In the hands of a cunning workman, one that has learn'd
All manner of crafts, with Athena's prompting to guide him;
So was their striving in battle evenly strain'd.

Now some beside these ships were fighting, others by those,
But Hector made straight at once for glorious Ajax.

By the selfsame ship did they struggle, nor could the one
Drive the other one back and burn the vessel with fire,
Nor the other one thrust him back, whom a God had brought in.
Then glorious Ajax spear'd through the breast, as he sought
To set fire to the ship, Caletor, Clytius' son,
And he fell with a thud and the torch fell out of his hand.
But Hector, beholding his cousin fall in the dust
In front of the black-hued ship, with a mighty cry
Call'd to the Trojans and Lycians: 'Ye men of Troy,
Ye Lycians and Dardanians, ye that do fight
Hand to hand, never yield your ground in this strait;
But save ye the son of Clytius, lest the Achaeans
Should strip him of armour, among the ships as he lies.'
So saying, he hurl'd at Ajax his glittering spear,
But miss'd him and smote Lycophron, the son of Mastor,
Ajax's squire from Cythera, one that beside him
Dwelt, for in holy Cythera a man he had slain:
The sharp bronze smote him above the ear, on the head,
As he stood beside Ajax; and backward he fell in the dust
From the stern of the ship to the ground, and his limbs were
unstrung.

Then shudder'd Ajax and thus to his brother he spake:
'Dear Teucer, a trusty friend of us both has been slain,
Mastor's son from Cythera, he that at home
With them that bare us we held in equal esteem.
He is slain by great-soul'd Hector. Where now are thy shafts
That bring swift death, and thy bow, the gift of Apollo?'
So spake he, and Teucer heard and ran to his side
And stood there, holding his bended bow and the quiver
Which held his arrows. Full swiftly he shot at the Trojans,
And Cleitus he smote, Peisenor's glorious son,
Polydamas' comrade, the lordly son of Panthöus,
As he held the reins and busied himself with the horses;
For there was he driving, where most of the ranks were in flight,
To please the Trojans and Hector. But swiftly on him
Came evil that none could avert, for all his desire:
On the back of his neck fell an arrow laden with woe,

And out of the chariot he fell, and the horses went back,
 Rattling the empty car. The first man that mark'd it
 Was the lord Polydamas; swiftly towards them he strode
 And to Protiaon's son, Astynous, gave
 The horses, strictly bidding him keep them at hand
 And keep an eye on himself; then back to the fray
 He went, and with the champions mingled again.
 Then Teucer another shaft for bronze-gift Hector
 Drew forth, and had made him cease to fight by the ships,
 Had he struck him in all his glory and reft him of life;
 But mark'd he was by wise-hearted Zeus, who defended
 Hector, but took from Teucer, Telamon's son,
 The praise. For the well-twisted cord on the goodly bow
 As Teucer drew it, he snapp'd; and the bronze-heavy shaft
 Flew wide of the mark, and the bow fell out of his hand.
 Then Teucer shudder'd and thus to his brother he spake:
 'Alas, some God is making our plans for the fray
 Utterly void; he has taken the bow from my hand
 And snapp'd the new-twisted cord I bound there this morning
 To bear the shafts that should dart therefrom in a stream.'
 Then answer'd him great Telamonian Ajax and said:
 'Aye, friend, but let thy bow and thy many shafts lie,
 For some God who envies the Argives has brought them to
 naught;
 But put thou a shield on thy shoulder, a spear in thy hand
 And fight with the Trojans and urge on the rest of the host.
 They shall not capture our well-bench'd ships unoppos'd,
 Brought low though we be; let the lust of battle be ours.'
 So spake he, and Teucer replac'd the bow in the hut,
 But a fourfold shield about his shoulders he put
 And upon his mighty head a well-fashion'd helm
 With a horse-hair crest, and terribly nodded the plume;
 And a valorous spear he took, tipp'd sharply with bronze,
 And running he came to Ajax and stood at his side.
 But when Hector saw that Teucer's shafts were in vain,
 He call'd to the Trojans and Lycians, shouting aloud:
 'Ye Trojans, Lycians, Dardanians, ye that do fight
 Hand to hand, be men, my friends, and bethink you
 Of valiant rage as ye fight by the hollow ships;
 For with these eyes of mine have I seen the shafts
 Of a man that is chief brought to naught by the working of Zeus.
 'Tis easy to tell the aid that Zeus gives to men,
 Both to those to whom he grants the victors' renown
 And for those whose might he abates and will not protect,

As now he treats the Achaeans, to us giving help.
 But fight ye in bands by the ships; and if any of you
 Shall come by his death and his fate by arrow or spear,
 Dead let him lie; 'tis no shame in defence of one's country
 To die—a man's wife and his sons who come after are safe,
 Unharm'd are his house and his land, if only the Argives
 Return in their ships to their own dear country again.'
 With these words he arous'd in every man courage and strength.
 And Ajax, over against him, call'd to his friends:
 'For shame, ye Argives! Our choice is clear—to be slain
 Or to save our lives by warding off harm from the ships.
 Think ye, if our ships by bright-plum'd Hector are taken,
 Each man of you here will make his way homeward on foot?
 Hear ye not Hector arousing the whole of the host,
 So eager he is in his heart to set fire to the ships?
 'Tis not to the dance that he bids them come, but the fray;
 And for us no better device nor counsel there is
 Than hand-to-hand fighting and matching our strength against
 theirs.

Better to live or to perish once and for all
 Than vainly thus by the ships long years to be pent
 In dreadful combat by men that are meaner than we.'

With these words he arous'd in every man courage and strength.
 Perimedes' son Schedius Hector then slew, in the host
 Of the Phocians a leader; and Ajax Laodamas slew,
 A leader of footmen, the lordly son of Antenor;
 Polydamas brought down Otus, a man of Cyllene,
 Friend of Pyleus' son, of the great-soul'd Epeians a captain.
 And Meges at sight of him leap'd; but Polydamas slipp'd
 Beneath him, and Meges miss'd; for the son of Panthöus
 Would Apollo not suffer to fall in the front of the fray;
 But Meges smote Croesmus full in the breast with his spear,
 And he fell with a thud, and his vanquisher stripp'd him of
 armour.

Meanwhile on Meges leap'd Dolops, skill'd with the spear,
 The son of Lampus, Laomedon's son, and the bravest
 That Lampus begat, well-skill'd in the fury of war;
 'Twas he that then smote full in the midst of his shield
 The son of Phyleus, rushing at him from near by;
 But he was sav'd by his corslet, cunningly-wrought,
 And fitted with plates of mail, that he wore. From Ephyle
 Had Phyleus the corslet brought, from Selleis' stream;
 'Twas a gift from his host there, Euphetes, the ruler of men,
 To be worn into battle, against any foes a defence;

And now from the flesh of his son it warded off death.
With his sharp spear did Meges then thrust at the helm
That Dolops was wearing, of bronze, with a horse-hair plume,
And he smote the topmost part of it, cutting therefrom
The horse-hair plume; and down it fell in the dust,
The whole of the plume, all shining with new scarlet dye.
Now while Meges stay'd fighting with Dolops, in hope he should
win,

Meanwhile Menelaus the warlike came to his aid,
And he stood with his spear on one side, nor did Dolops per-
ceive him,

And hurling it, him on the shoulder he smote from behind.
The spear in its eager fury tore through his breast,
Piercing its way; and prone he fell on his face.
Then the twain of them rush'd to strip from his shoulders the
armour

Of figur'd bronze. But Hector his kinsmen all
Call'd, and the first he rebuk'd was strong Melanippus,
Hicateon's son. Till now his slow-moving kine
He had graz'd in Percota, while yet were the foemen afar,
But when the tossing ships of the Danaans came,
Back came he to Ilios, winning the Trojans' esteem
And dwelling with Priam, who lov'd him as one of his sons.
Him did Hector rebuke, and, addressing him, thus did he speak:
'Is this the time to relax, Melanippus? Alas,
Is it naught to thy heart that Dolops thy cousin is slain?
Seest thou not how they busy themselves with his armour?
But follow thou me, for no more may we strive with the Argives
Till either we slay them or they steep Ilios take
And, slaughtering all the townsmen, make it their own.'

So saying, he led the way, and after him went
That godlike other; the great Telamonian Ajax
Urg'd on the Achaeans, and these were the words that he said:
'Be ye men, my friends, and have some shame in your hearts;
And each be asham'd of the rest in the terrible fray;
When men are asham'd not to fight, more are sav'd than are
slain,

When they flee from the field, neither honour nor safety is theirs.'
So he spake, and they of themselves were keen to defend,
But they stor'd his words in their hearts and fenc'd in the ships
With a barrier of bronze; but Zeus rous'd the Trojans against
them.

Menelaus, fam'd for the war-cry, Antilochus rous'd:
'Antilochus, never an Argive is younger than thou

Nor swifter of foot nor in fight more doughty than thou;
I would that some Trojan, leaping at him, thou wouldst smite.'
So saying, himself hasten'd back, but the other he rous'd,
And he leap'd from the champions' ranks, and, glancing around,
Hurl'd his bright spear. Then backward the Trojans recoil'd
As the warrior cast. Not in vain his spear he let fly,
High-soul'd Melanippus he smote, Hicataon's son,
As he came to the fight; he was hit on the breast, by the nipple,
And he fell with a thud and darkness enfolded his eyes.
Upon him Antilochus sprang, like a hound that leaps
On a wounded fawn that, ev'n as it runs from its lair,
The huntsman chances to smite, unstringing its limbs;
So on thee, Melanippus, the brave Antilochus leap'd
To strip thee of armour. But Hector saw what befell
And running came to oppose him amidst all the fray;
Antilochus stay'd not, though speedy a fighter was he,
Like a wild beast he fled, that evil has wrought,
Slaying a hound or a herdsman beside his kine,
And that flees before men may band together to chase him;
Even so fled Nestor's son, and the Trojans and Hector
With wondrous shouting pour'd on him woe-laden shafts;
But he turn'd and stood, when he reach'd the throng of his
friends.

But the Trojans like ravening lions hungry for meat
Rush'd on the ships, fulfilling Cronion's behests,
Who their warlike temper inflam'd but the Danaans' hearts
Palsied with dread nor allow'd them glory to win,
For his purpose was set on giving to Hector renown
That the son of Priam might hurl on the high-beak'd ships
Fierce, unwearying fire and for Thetis fulfil
Her presumptuous prayer. And therefore he waited the time
When the blaze of a burning ship he should see with his eyes;
That seen, he ordain'd in his thought that the Trojans again
Should be chas'd from the ships and the Danaans victory win.
So now in the breast of Hector courage he rous'd
'Gainst the hollow ships, though Hector was eager himself
And raged like the spear-shaking Wargod or ruinous fire
That furiously burns in the folds of the forested hills,
And his lips foam'd and beneath his terrible brows
His eyes were as blazing fire and his helmet of bronze
Around his temples dreadfully shook as he fought.
Fain would he break through the ranks of the Danaan men
Where the densest throng and the goodliest armour he saw,
Yet e'en so might he not break them, though eager he was;

Nay, but they stood as a tower, embattled and strong,
Like a great rock and steep that hard by the hoar-grey sea
The swift onset abides of the shrill-blowing winds
And the swelling waves of the sea that roars at its foot;
So steadfast the Danaans abode nor bethought them of flight,
But Hector, flashing with fire, on this side and that
Leapt at the throng, as a fleet wave rear'd by the winds
Falls on a storm-driven ship and the whole of the hull
Is hidden in foam and the dreadful blast of the wind
Roars on her sail and the mariners tremble with fear;
For only a handbreadth divides them from imminent death:
E'en so in the breasts of the Danaans their spirit was toss'd.
But he, like a ravenous lion falling on kine
That graze in a marshland meadow innumerable
And their herdsman is shiftless as yet and knows not the way
To fight with a beast that his crook-horn'd cattle assails,
But ever he paces abreast of the rear or the van
And the spoiler leaps in their midst and a heifer devours
And the herd flees in panic, e'en so were the Danaan men
By Hector and father Zeus with terror distraught.
But Hector among them slew Periphetes alone,
The son of Copraeus, the man that was wonted to go
On the errands of lord Eurystheus when Hercules toil'd;
Of that base father was born a better than he
In all good arts, for in fleetness of foot and in war
And in counsel among the best in Mycene he was,
Who now to manslaying Hector yielded renown;
For, turning to flee, he tripp'd on the rim of his shield
That he bore in battle, a shield that reach'd to his feet—
Thereon did he stumble and fall, and the helmet of bronze
Around his temples wondrously rang as he fell.
And Hector was swift to mark him and ran to his side
And planted a spear in his breast in sight of his friends
That for all their sorrow avail'd not their comrade to save,
For themselves of godlike Hector were sorely adread.

And now to the foremost line of the ships they were come,
And the Trojans between their prows pour'd in upon them
And the Argive ranks of necessity yielded a space
But rallied and stood their ground when they came to the huts
Not scattering this way or that, for terror and shame
Withheld them, and each on his fellow was calling to stand.
And chiefly Gerenian Nestor, the Warden of Argos,
Besought every man and by those who begat him adjur'd:
'Be ye men, my friends,' he said, 'and fear in your hearts

Other men's contempt, and call ye to mind, every man,
Your children and wives, your chattels, your parents dear,
Whether living still or already one with the dead;
By them I beseech you, by them who are not with us here,
To make a firm stand and not to turn backward in flight.'

With these words he arous'd in every man courage and strength,
And Athena thrust from their eyes the wonderful cloud
Of mist, and upon them the light came from either side,
The side of the ships and that of well-balanc'd war.
And all alike saw Hector and saw his friends,
Both those who stood in the rear and join'd not the fray
And all that battled beside the swift-going ships.
Nor longer it pleas'd the great-hearted Ajax to bide
In the place whence all the other Achaeans had fled,
But with great strides he mov'd o'er the decks of the ships
Wielding with both his hands a ship-fighting pike
Jointed with clinchers, twenty-two cubits in length,
And ev'n as a man, well-skill'd in horsemanship, rides
Four horses coupled together, running abreast,
And drives them along the highway from pasture to town
Full speed, and the many onlookers, women and men,
Watch him and marvel, while nimbly he changes his seat
From one to another and never misses his vault,
E'en so did Ajax o'er many a deck of the ships
With long strides move, and his voice went up to the heav'n
As he call'd with terrible cries to the Danaan men
To defend the ships and the huts. Then Hector no more
In the throng of this corsleted Trojans brook'd to abide
But ev'n as a tawny eagle swoops on the tribes
Of winged fowl where they feed in a riverside pool,
Wild geese or cranes or long-neck'd swans in a flock,
E'en so darted Hector straight on a blue-prow'd ship,
Swooping on it, and mightily Zeus with his hand
Urged him behind and his comrades also arous'd.
So once again grew bitter the fight by the ships,
And both of those hosts thou wouldst deem unwearied, unworn
In the strife as they fell on each other, so fiercely they fought.
Yet nowise alike were their thoughts; for the Danaan men
Dream'd not of any escape save only in death,
But the hope in the breast of every Trojan was strong
To fire the ships and the Argive heroes to slay.
So minded, they set on each other, in hope or in fear,
And Hector seiz'd on the stern of a seafaring ship
Swift on the brine, that Protesilaus had borne

To Troyland but brought him not back to Achaea his home;
Round his ship the Achaeans and Trojans engaged
In hand-to-hand fight, unfain from a distance to shoot,
Unfain to abide the hail of the arrows or spears,
But, standing hard by each other with single intent,
They fought with keen-whetted axes and hatchets of bronze
That came to their hands, or with great swords or two-headed
pikes;

And many a belted brand, dark-scabbarded, fell
To the earth from the hands or the shoulders of warrior men
As they fought with each other and black earth ran with their
blood.

And Hector relax'd not his hold on the stern of the ship
But, grasping the ensign, call'd to the Trojans aloud:
'Bring fire and all together the warcry awake,
Now Zeus this day of requital has giv'n for our pains,
And capture the ships that maugre the will of the Gods
Sail'd hither and many a woe upon us has brought
Since the craven hearts of our elders forbade me to fight
By the sterns of the ships and the army from battle withheld.
Nay, even if farseeing Zeus then cozen'd our wits,
Now he spurs us on to the fight and bids us be bold.'
So spake he, and they more fiercely the Argives assail'd;
But no more stay'd Ajax, with darts being thickly beset
But withdrew a little, for death he deem'd to be nigh,
To a bridge seven foot high, and went from the deck
Of the shapely ship. On guard he stood there, and aye
He thrust with his spear from the ships any Trojan who sought
To carry up to the ships unwearying fire,
And ever with terrible cries to the Danaans call'd:
'My friends, warriors of Argos, squires of the Wargod,
Be ye men, my friends, and remember your might in the fray.
Do we think there are others to give us help at our back
Or a stronger wall to ward off destruction from men?
No city is near, with towers strongly begirt,
To defend us, no host to make the victory ours.
In a plain throng'd with the mail-clad Trojans are we,
With our backs to the sea, afar from the land of our birth.
In the might of our hands, not in slackness, deliverance lies.'
He spake, and raging thrust with his sharp-edg'd spear;
And if any Trojan rush'd up to the hollow ships
With blazing fire, to please him that drave them on—Hector;
With his long spear would Ajax await him and smite;
And twelve in close fighting he wounded in front of the ships.

Patroclus fights in Achilles' armour and drives the Trojans from the ships, but, venturing to attempt an entry into Troy, is slain by Hector with Apollo's help.

So they round the well-timber'd ship were fighting amain,
 But Patroclus return'd to Achilles, shepherd of men,
 Shedding tears, as a spring down the face of a rock
 Glistening black, precipitous, trickles and drips;
 And, seeing him, swift-foot Achilles had pity on him
 And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
 'Patroclus, why dost thou weep like some mite of a girl
 That runs by her mother and asks to be taken in arms,
 Plucking her skirt, and hinders her steps as she goes
 And looks through her tears till she take her up in her arms?
 Like hér, Patroclus, a round tear lettest thou fall;
 Hast thou somewhat to tell the Myrmidon men or myself?
 Or came there tidings from home, heard only by thee?
 They say that thy father Menoetius still is alive,
 And alive 'mong his people is Peleus, Aeacus' son,
 For either of whom, were he dead, right sore should we grieve.
 Or is it the Argives thou pitiest, seeing them die
 By the hollow ships through their own presumptuousness?
 Speak then, and hide not the truth, that I also may know.'
 And, heavily groaning, the knightly Patroclus replied:
 'Be thou not wroth, O Achilles, best of thy peers,
 So great is the trouble that on the Achaeans is come;
 For verily all that before were our bravest and best
 By the ships are lying, wounded with arrow or spear;
 Pierc'd with an arrow the stalwart Diomed is
 And stricken by spear are Odysseus and King Agamemnon,
 And Eurypylus too has an arrow-wound in his thigh;
 With these are busy the leeches, in pharmacy skill'd,
 Healing their wounds. But thou art implacable still:
 Never may anger like thine my spirit possess,
 Accurst in thy valour! For who can have profit of thee
 Of Achaeans hereafter, if ruin thou ward not from us?
 Ruthless thou art, and Peleus was never thy father
 Nor Thetis thy mother: the hoar-grey sea was thy mother
 And the flinty rocks thy begetters, so cruel thou art!

But if in thy heart some evil presage thou shun
 And thy lady mother have told thee a warning from Zeus,
 Yet me do thou send with the rest of the Myrmidon men
 That so I may shine as a light to the Danaan host,
 And lend me thy goodly arms on my shoulders to gird,
 If haply the foe may mistake me and hold them aloof
 And the warlike sons of Achaea a breathing-time win:
 One brief hour were enough their strength to renew,
 And we, unwearied, the wearied Trojans could drive
 Back to the city, away from the ships and the camp.'
 So spake he, beseeching his friend, fond fool that he was!
 Nor knew than an evil death he had ask'd for himself;
 And, greatly troubled, Achilles address'd him again:
 'Woe's me, Patroclus! what word is this thou hast said?
 No prophecy is it that moves me, known to myself,
 Nor yet has my mother told me a warning from Zeus:
 Sore grief is it rather that always weighs on my heart
 From the day that Atrides, daring his equal to spoil,
 Took my guerdon away, being greater in power,
 Sore grief, after all the troubles my hearts has endured,
 That the maid whom the sons of the Danaans chose for my prize,
 Whom I won with my spear when a well-wall'd city I sack'd,
 Her has the King, Agamemnon, snatch'd from my hands
 As though I were alien born, without honour or rights.
 But bygone shall bygone be: it little beseems
 To nurse my anger for ever, yet surely I thought
 Never to cease from my wrath till the hour should arrive
 When my own ships with the cry of battle resound.
 Do thou then gird on thy shoulders my glorious arms
 And lead the war-loving Myrmidons into the fight,
 Since the Trojan host like a thunder-cloud by the ships
 Is mightily settled, and pent on the surf-beaten shore
 The Achaeans hold but a scantied space of the land.
 Verily all Troy's city upon us is come,
 Embolden'd because no longer my visor they see
 Gleaming before them, since swiftly their corpses should choke
 The water-courses, if King Agamemnon to me
 Had only been friendly, but now they beleaguer our camp;
 For not in the hands of Diomed rages the spear
 To drive destruction away from the Danaan men,
 Nor heard I as yet the voice of Atrides shouting
 From his hateful mouth, but the voice of man-slaying Hector
 Bursts round me, heartening the Trojans, while they with their
 cries

Fill all the plain and o'ercome the Achaeans in fight.
Yet e'en so, Patroclus, to ward sheer doom from the ships,
Fall on and slay, lest with blazing fire they consume
Our fleet and take from us wholly our day of return.
But hear thou my final command, and obey me in this
That a glorious name thou mayst win for thee and for me
From all the Achaeans, and they the beautiful maid
With many a splendid gift may quickly restore:
Having driven them off from the ships, return thou at once
Tho' Zeus loud-thundering grant thee glory to win,
And seek thou not without me to continue the fight
'Gainst the war-loving Trojans and lessen my honour thereby
Nor exult thou so in the battle and joy of the fight,
While slaying the foe, as to lead thy men o'er the plain
Troywards, lest one of the Gods from Olympus descend
And assail thee, for dear to Apollo is Troy above all;
But turn thee again, having once deliverance brought
To the ships, and suffer the others to war on the plain.
O Zeus and Athena and Phoebus, would it might be
That not even one of the Trojans from death should escape
Nor one of the Argives but only we two of them all,
That alone Troy's sacred coronal we may unbind!'

So spake the comrades together; but Ajax the while
No longer the onset abode nor the hail of the darts,
O'ercome by the counsel of Zeus and the spearmen of Troy:
Terribly rang on his temples the glittering helm
'Neath the dint of missiles, for never the flight of them ceas'd
On his well-wrought cheek-piece of bronze, and his shoulder
and arm

Were weary with steadfastly holding his ponderous shield.
Yet they could not, for all their strokes, beat down his defence;
But ever he panted for breath, and from every limb
The sweat ran streaming, nor moment of respite he had
Nor a breathing-space, but evil on evil was heap'd.

Tell me, ye Muses, that mansions have in Olympus,
Tell me how fire first fell on the Danaan ships.
Hector smote with his broadsword Ajax's spear
Behind the bronze by the socket, and shore it away,
And now Telamonian Ajax held in his hand
No more than an ash-tree shaft, and far from him fell
The brazen head of the spear and rang on the ground;
And Ajax knew in his soul 'twas a deed of the Gods,
And he shudder'd to see how the Father that thunders on high
Baffled his prowess and victory will'd to the foe.

And while from the darts he withdrew, unwearying fire
The Trojans hurl'd on a ship, and through her there ran
Unquenchable flame, that laid swift hold on her stern;
And Achilles smote on his thighs and his comrade address'd:
'Quick, Patroclus! thou captain of horsemen, arise,
I see 'mid the ships the destroying onset of fire.
Let them not capture the ships and bar our retreat,
But gird thee at once in the arms while I muster the host.'

He spake, and Patroclus girt him in glittering bronze;
First on his shins the hero fasten'd the greaves,
Beautiful handiwork, clasp'd with anklets of silver;
And next the corslet about his breast he did on,
The starry corslet of swift-footed Aeacides,
And the sword of bronze about his shoulders he slung
Silver-studded, and girded the ponderous shield;
And then on his head the well-wrought helmet he set
Horsehair-plum'd, that terribly nodded its crest.
Then grasp'd he two stout lances that fitted his palm,
But, alone of Achilles' armour, he took not the spear
Huge, heavy, and stalwart, that none of the other Achaeans
Could brandish and cast but only Achilles himself,
The Pelian ash that Chiron to Peleus had given
From Pelion's summit, the death of heroes to be.
And he bade Automedon yoke the horses with speed,
For next to warlike Achilles he honour'd him most,
The trustiest man in the battle to answer his call,
And Automedon yoked for Patroclus the fleet-footed steeds,
Dapple and Chestnut, swift as the wings of the wind,
The pair that the Harpy Podarga to Zephyrus bore
As she graz'd on the mead by the streams of Oceanus;
And Pedasus, goodly of breed, in the traces he tied,
That Achilles took when Eetion's city he sack'd,
Of lineage mortal, that now with Immortals was match'd.
But Achilles went and the Myrmidons quickly array'd
With arms in the huts, and they, like ravening wolves
With courage and strength in their hearts unutterable,
That, hung'ring, have kill'd an antler'd stag in the hills
And rend him, and all their jaws drip red with his blood,
And they go in a pack to lap with their delicate tongues
At a shady spring the surface of water and belch
The blood they have gorg'd, but ravenous still are the hearts
In their dauntless breasts tho' their bellies are swollen with
meat,

So dauntless the captains and chiefs of the Myrmidon men

Round the brave squire of swift-footed Aeacides
Mov'd, and midmost them all stood warlike Achilles,
Heartening horses and warriors armed for the fight.

Fifty ships had Achilles, darling of Zeus,
To Troyland led, and there sat in each of the ships
Fifty men on the benches, comrades of his,
And five were the leaders he chose their captains to be
And to give them commands, but himself was the chief over all.
The first of the companies noble Menesthius led
Son of the stream Sperchëus nurtur'd from heaven,
Whom Peleus' daughter, the fair Polydora, had borne
To the weariless river, a woman couch'd with a God,
But in name he was Borus's son, her lover 'mong men,
Who openly wed her and paid for her measureless gifts.
Eudorus captain'd the second, a warrior staunch,
Son of a maid, Polymela peerless in dance,
Daughter of Phylas: her did the Slayer of Argus
Love when he saw her among the maidens that sang
In the choir of Artemis, Huntress-queen of the wild,
And straightway he went to her bower and lay with her there
In secret, a God, and she bore him a glorious son
Eudorus, swift in the chase and mighty in war;
But when Ílithuia, whose gifts are the travail-throes,
Had brought him to birth and he saw the rays of the sun,
Then did the mighty Echeclus, a peer of the Gods,
Woo her with numberless gifts and lead to his halls,
But the boy by Phylas was rear'd, who nurtur'd him well
Loving his daughter's child as a son of his own.
And Maemalus' son the third of the companies led,
Pisander, the stoutest of all the Myrmidon men
To fight with the spear save only Menoetius' son;
The fourth did Phoenix command, the veteran knight,
And noble Alcimedon, son of Lærces, the fifth.
But soon as Achilles had marshall'd them all in their arms
Each with its leader, he straitly enjoined them and said:
'Myrmidons, see ye forget not the threatening words
Wherewith at the swift-going ships ye menaced the foe
Through all the time of my wrath, accusing me thus:
"Hard-hearted Achilles, with gall thou surely wert nurs'd,
Thou pitiless one, that holdest us back from the foe:
Homewards let us return in our seagoing ships,
Since wrath so accursèd rules thy implacable heart."
So clamour'd ye, gathering about me, but now has appear'd
The toil and the trial of arms that of old was your love;

Keep all of you valiant hearts when the Trojans ye fight.'

So spake he and stirr'd the strength and the spirit of each,
And they press'd still closer, hearing the words of their Prince;
Like the close-set stones of a mason building the walls
Of a lofty house to defy the force of the winds
So closely their helmets and high-boss'd shields were array'd,
Shield and helmet and warrior pressing each other,
And the horse-hair crests on the gleaming ridges of bronze
Touch'd as they nodded, so closely they stood in the ranks.
But in front of them all two heroes, in spirit as one,
Patroclus and brave Automedon, harness'd for war,
Stood ready to fight in their van; and Achilles anon
Went to his hut and open'd the lid of a chest
Wondrously wrought, that Thetis the silvery-footed
Had placed in his ship for his use and with doublets had stored
And wind-proof mantles and coverlets woolly and soft.
A goblet he kept in the chest: no other of men
Might drink from its lips but himself and to none of the Gods
Did he make libation therewith save the Father alone;
This vessel he took and with brimstone purified it,
And thereafter lav'd it with water fresh from the spring
And, washing his hands, fill'd full with the bright-hearted wine.
Then, standing midmost the court, libation he pour'd
Gazing to heav'n, and the Thunderer mark'd as he pray'd:
'Zeus Dodonaean, Pelasgian, dwelling afar,
That rulest in chill Dodóna where round thee thy priests,
The Selli, with feet unwash'd lie couch'd on the ground,
If ever aforetime thou heardest the voice of my prayer
And didst honour mé but the Danaans greatly afflict,
Hear me now yet again and fulfil my desire.
Myself in the rear 'mid the ships' assemblage will stay,
But my comrade to battle I send with the Myrmidon hosts;
To him do thou speed the victory, far-seeing Zeus,
And his heart make strong in his breast, that Hector may know,
He also, whether my squire in the battle has skill
Fighting alone, or his hands invincible rage
Only with me at his side in the mellay of war.
But, when from the ships he has driven the tumult of war,
Scatheless let him return to the swift-going ships
With all his arms and his comrades that fight in the press.'
So spake he praying and Zeus wise-counselling heard,
Who granted him half of his prayer but half he denied:
That Patroclus should drive the battle away from the ships
He granted, but not from the battle safe to return.

So he, having pour'd libation and pray'd to the God,
Went back to his hut and the cup replac'd in the chest
And stood at the door of his hut, for still in his heart
The dreadful strife of the armies he long'd to behold.

But led by their great-hearted captain, the Myrmidons, arm'd,
March'd forward till swelling with pride on the Trojans they
rush'd;

And straightway, like nesting wasps by the side of a road
Provok'd by children that tease them after their wont
By stirring their wayside nests and infuriate them
In their childish sport and make an annoyance for all,
If chance some wayfaring man, as he passes along,
Unwitting to rouse them, forth they fly from their nests
With valiant hearts and each one his offspring defends—
With heart and spirit like these the Myrmidon men
Pour'd forth from the ships and a cry unquenchable rose,
And Patroclus call'd on his comrades, shouting aloud:
'Myrmidons, comrades in arms of Pelëides,
Prove yourselves men nor your furious valour forget
That so we may honour Achilles, the bravest by far
In the Argive host, as his squires that fight in the press
Are also the bravest, and King Agamemnon may know
His blindness in honouring not the best of his peers.'
So spake he and stirr'd the strength and the spirit of each
And they fell on the Trojans, all in a pack, and the ships
Terribly echoed the cries of the Myrmidon men.

But soon as the Trojans were 'ware of Menoetius' son
And saw both him and his squire in their glittering arms,
Their spirit was shaken and all their phalanxes reel'd,
Deeming that swift-foot Achilles at last by the ships
Had cast his anger away and to amity turn'd;
And each stood peering about, sheer doom to escape.
And Patroclus was first his gleaming javelin to cast
Straight in their midst where thickest the warriors throng'd
By the stern of the ship of great-hearted Protesiläus,
And he smote Pyraechmes that out of Amydon led
Paeonian horsemen from Axius' watery vale,
On the right shoulder he smote him, and there in the dust
He fell on his back with a groan and his comrades around
Trembled with fear, for Patroclus made them afraid
By slaying their chief, that was ever their best in the fight;
Forth he drove them and quench'd the fire on the ship,
And the vessel was left half-burnt. But the Trojans around
Fled with a marvellous din, and the Danaans pour'd

'Mongst the hollow ships, and ceaseless the tumult arose.
As when from the top of a mountain the Lord of the Storm,
E'en Zeus the Lightener, lifts the canopied cloud,
And the peaks and the glens and the sharp-ridg'd promontories
Shine clear, and from heav'n breaks open the infinite air,
So they, having driv'n from the ships the ruinous fire,
Took breath for a while but rest from the battle had none;
Not yet were the Trojans driv'n from the ring of the ships
In downright flight by the warlike Achaeans, but still
They resisted and only perforce gave ground from the ships.

Then man slew man of the chieftains, where singly they
fought:

And first the valiant son of Menoetius struck
On the thigh-bone brave Arëilycus, just as he turn'd,
With his keen-edg'd spear, and drove it clean through the limb
And shatter'd the bone, and he fell on his face in the dust;
And next Menelaus Thōas smote in the breast
Where the edge of his shield expos'd it, and loosen'd his knees;
And Phylides mark'd Amphiclus, as forward he charg'd,
And was first with a thrust of his spear, and struck on his thigh
Where the muscle is thickest, and round the point of the spear
The sinews were sever'd and darkness shrouded his eyes.
And of Nestor's sons, the one, Antilochus, spear'd
Atymnius, driving the pointed bronze through his flank,
And forward he fell: and his brother Maris in turn
Assail'd Antilochus, wroth for Atymnius slain,
And defended the dead, but Thrasymed, marking him there,
Smote Maris behind the shoulder before he could wound,
And tore the root of the arm with the point of his spear
And shear'd the muscles away right down to the bone,
And he fell with a crash and darkness shrouded his eyes:
So did they both, two brothers by brothers o'erthrown,
Sarpédon's glorious comrades, to Erebus go,
Amisódarus' sons that the dread Chimera had rear'd,
Invincible monster, a bane to many a man.
And Ajax, Öileus' son, Cleobulus assail'd,
Entangled deep in the throng, and took him alive,
Then drove his sword through his neck, that his strength was
unstrung,
And the blade was warm with his blood and the darkness of
death
And Fate's invincible hand laid hold on his eyes.
And next Peneläus and Lycon met in the press
And hurl'd their javelins in vain, for each other they miss'd,

But instantly clos'd with their swords, and Lycon his man
Smote on the horsehair crest but the sword on the bronze
Broke at the hilt, and the other smote on his neck
'Neath the ear, and the blade cut deep and only the skin
Held, and his head lopp'd sideways and loos'd were his limbs.
Then Meriones, swift-striding, Acamas struck
On the right shoulder just as he mounted his car,
And he fell from the step and mist on his eyelids was shed;
And with pitiless bronze Idomeneus Erymas smote
In the mouth, and right through his throat the point of it went
Under the brain, and shatter'd the bones of his neck,
And his teeth dropp'd out on the ground and shotten with blood
Were both his eyeballs, and blood from his nostrils and lips
He spirted, gaping, and death's black cloud on him fell.
So slew the Danaan chieftains each one his man;
As when lambs or kids are assail'd by ravenous wolves
That pick them out from the flock as they scatter on hills
Through the witlessness of their herdsmen, and swiftly the
wolves,

Seeing it, harry the impotent young of the flock,
So they on the Trojans fell, who bethought them at once
Of tumultuous flight and their furious valour forgot.

Now mighty Ajax for bronze-helm'd Hector reserv'd
The cast of his spear, but Hector, a master of war,
Stood with his bull-hide shield protecting his breast
And watch'd for the whizzing of arrows, the hurtling of spears;
Well was he 'ware that vict'ry had pass'd to the foe,
Yet even so he abode and his comrades would save.
As when from Olympus a storm-cloud spreads o'er the heaven,
Drawn from the boundless aether, when tempest impends,
So from the trench rose clamour and tumult and rout
As the Trojans cross'd in disorder. But Hector was borne,
Arm'd, by his horses away, and left in the lurch
Was the army of Troy, unwittingly penn'd by the ditch,
Where many a fleet-footed horse, as he pull'd in the yoke,
Splinter'd the pole and his master's chariot left;
And Patroclus follow'd them, calling the Danaans on,
With death in his heart, while the Trojans in clamorous rout
Fill'd all the ways, being broken, and whirling on high
Was scatter'd the dust, and the horses strain'd at the cars
Back to the city, away from the ships and the camp.

But Patroclus, where thickest he saw the Trojans in flight,
Charg'd with a cry, and warriors under the wheels
Fell from their cars, and chariots toppled and crash'd:

Straight o'er the trench his fleet-footed horses he drove,
The immortal breed that the gods to Peleus had given,
Straining forward, for still upon Hector he cried
Eager to smite, but his steeds bore Hector away.
As when on an autumn day all earth is oppress'd
'Neath thunder and storm, when Zeus tempestuous rain
On the black earth pours, being wroth and angry with men
That uphold not law in a court but crookedly judge
And drive out justice and reck not of vengeance from heaven,
And all their rivers are swollen, rushing in flood,
And many a terrace the torrents wash from the slopes
And down to the purple sea with a thunderous roar
Leap from their channels, wasting the labours of men,
So thunder'd the Trojan chariots racing for Troy.

But Patroclus, when once he had cloven the phalanxes' front,
Headed them back to the ships nor suffer'd the foe
For all their yearning to make for the city of Troy,
But between the ships and the river and Ilion's walls
Fell on them slaying and many a blood-guilt aveng'd;
Pronōus first with his shining spear did he smite
Behind the guard of his shield and loosen'd his knees
That he fell with a crash, and Thestor next he assail'd,
Aenops' son: in his chariot crouching he sat,
For all distraught were his wits and the reins from his hands
He had dropp'd in his fright, when Patroclus drove with a spear
At his right jaw and pierc'd through the teeth of the man;
Then grasp'd he the spear-shaft and hois'd him over the rail
As a man on a jutting headland that looks o'er the sea
Hauls out a fish with his line and glittering hook:
So hois'd he out of the chariot Thestor agape
And flung him down on his face, and the life from him fled.
And next Eryläus he smote on the crown of his head
With a stone, as he charg'd, and his skull was broken in two
In the brazen helmet, and prone he fell on the earth
And death embrac'd him that quells the spirit of man;
And Erymas next, Amphoterus, noble Epaltes,
Damastor's son Tlepolemus, Echius, Pyris,
Ipheus, Euippus, and Argeas' son Polymelus,
Each in his turn did he stretch on the bounteous earth.

But when Sarpédon his kirtled warriors saw
Fall'n by the hand of Patroclus, Menoetius' son,
Upbraiding the godlike Lycians loudly he cried:
'Shame on you, fleeing Lycians! Now be ye strong,
For I this man will encounter and learn if I may

Who masters us here and evils so many has wrought;
For of many a noble Trojan the knees he has loos'd.'
So spake Sarpedon and leapt in his armour to earth,
And Patroclus too, when he saw him, sprang from his car,
And there, like vultures that high on a precipice fight
With hook-nebb'd beak and with talon, screaming the while,
So shriek'd those two in their rage as they fell on each other.
But Cronian Zeus, beholding, had pity on them,
And straightway spake he to Hera, his sister and wife:
'Alas and alack! Sarpedon, dearest of men,
Is fated to fall by the hand of Menoetius' son;
Two ways is divided the wavering thought in my breast,
Whether to snatch him alive from the dolorous fight
And set him in safety in Lycia's bounteous land
Or to let him be slain by the hand of Menoetius' son.'
And to him did the great-eyed Goddess Hera reply:
'Dread son of Cronos, what word is this thou hast said?
Mortal-born as he is, long destin'd by Fate,
Art thou minded to save him alive from infamous death?
Have then thy will, but we others shall no way assent.
For this will I say, and lay thou the word to thy heart:
If living thou send Sarpedon back to his home,
Consider,—another Immortal hereafter will wish
His own dear son from the murderous battle to save,
For many there are round Priam's city that fight,
Sons of Immortals, whose terrible wrath thou wilt wake.
If thou lovest thy son Sarpedon and grieveest for him,
Suffer him now in the murderous mellay of war
To fall by the hand of Patroclus, Menoetius' son,
But after, when life and the spirit his body have left,
Send Death and the Comforter, Sleep, to bear him away
Until they have laid him in far-spread Lycia's land
And there shall his brothers and kinsmen his funeral make
And build him a tomb and a pillar, the dues of the dead.'
So spake she, and hé disobey'd not, the Father of all:
But a bloody dew from on high he shed on the earth
To honour his son, that Patroclus was fated to slay
In deep-loam'd Troyland, far from his Lycian home.

Now when in their onset near to each other they were,
There did Patroclus smite Thrasymélus renown'd,
The goodly squire of the lord Sarpedon, and pierc'd
His lowermost belly and straightway loosen'd his limbs.
But Sarpedon, when he in his turn his javelin cast,
Miss'd his man but the trace-horse Pegasus struck

On the right shoulder, and roaring he breathed out his life
And fell in the dust with a shriek, and fled was his soul:
But the yoke-horses rear'd and the creaking yoke-tree was
wrench'd

And tangled the reins, when the trace-horse lay in the dust,
But the squire Automedon instant remedy found,
For, drawing at once the long-edg'd sword at his thigh,
He leapt from his chariot and cut the traces adrift;
And the yoke-horses righted themselves and answer'd the rein.

Then clos'd they again and their deadly quarrel renew'd,
And again Sarpedon, casting his javelin, miss'd:
Just over Patroclus's shoulder the point of it went
But struck not, and he in his turn rose up to his cast
And aim'd, and the weapon flew not amiss from his hand
But struck where the throbbing heart by the midriff is clasp'd,
And Sarpedon fell, as a poplar falls or an oak

Or tapering pine by ship-wrights hewn on the hills
With their whetted axes for timber to build them a ship:
So he by his horses and chariot lay at his length
Moaning aloud and clutching the blood-sodden dust.
As a lion falls on a herd and a great-hearted bull
Kills 'mong the shambling kine, the pride of his herd,
And under the claws of the lion he dies with a groan,
So by Patroclus perish'd the Lycian prince
But in death forgot not his mettle and call'd to his friend:

'Sweet Glaucus, thou warrior chief among warrior men,
Now is there need of a spearman and warrior bold,
Now be war thy desire, if a man thou art still!
First call upon each of the Lycian captains afield
And spur them on for their lord, Sarpedon, to fight
And thereafter thyself with the spear do battle for me.
In time hereafter thy shame and reproach shall I be
For all thy days and beyond, if the Danaan men
In the ships' assemblage despoil Sarpedon of arms:
Play then the man, and spur thou the Lycians on.'
He spake, and the shadow of death on his nostrils and eyes
Fell, and Patroclus, planting his foot on his breast,
Drew forth the spear, and his heart-blood follow'd the spear
And the life flew out as the brazen point he withdrew;
But his snorting horses the warlike Myrmidons held
As they broke from their master's chariot, eager to fly.

Dread grief came upon Glaucus, hearing that voice,
And his spirit was stirr'd because he could succour him not,
And he press'd his arm with his hand, for himself had a wound,

A galling wound, that he got as he rush'd on the wall
When Teucer had smitten him warding death from his friends;
And he utter'd a prayer to Apollo the far-shooting God:
'Hear me, O Lord, that in Lycia's bounteous land
Or in Troyland dwellest, for thóu canst everywhere hear
A man in his need, as need now comes upon me.
Stark is the wound I have got, and the pains in my hand
Shoot continually, and the blood from my wound
Cannot be stanch'd, and my shoulder is heavy and numb;
No longer a spear can I hold nor enter the fray
To fight with my foes: and our best, Sarpedon, is dead,
Whose father is Zeus tho' He succours not even his own.
But do thou, O Apollo, heal my desperate wound,
Lull thou my pains and give to me strength yet again
To call to my comrades the Lycians, spurring them on,
And myself with the spear o'er the dead man fallen to fight.'
So spake he praying, and Phoebus Apollo heard him;
Straightway he lull'd his pains and the darkening blood
Stanch'd in his wound, and breath'd in him courage and
strength:

And Glaucus knew it himself and rejoic'd in his heart
That so quickly the great Apollo his suppliant heard.

First went he o'er all the field and the captains besought
Of the Lycian host for their lord, Sarpedon, to fight,
And with great strides to the Trojans thereafter he went,
Polydamas, Panthöus' son, and godlike Agenor
And brave Aeneas and brazen-helmeted Hector,
And standing near them in winged words to them spake:
'Hector, surely thy allies thou wholly forgett'st
That for thy country, far from their friends and their home,
Minish their lives, but thou helpst them not in their need.
Sarpedon is fallen, that captain'd the Lycian host
And upheld by his dooms and prowess the Lycian realm,
Yea, him to the spear of Patroclus has Ares subdued:
Stand by him, friends, and reproach yourselves in your hearts
Should ever a hand despoil or dishonour the dead
Of the Myrmidons wroth for all the Achaeans that fell
Whom we with our spears have slain by the swift-going ships.'
So spake he, and grief o'ermastering, not to be borne,
For Sarpedon seiz'd on their hearts, since ever he was
A bulwark of Troy, tho' a stranger, and many he led
In his train, but himself in the battle was best of them all;
And straight they made for the Danaans, and Hector was first
Among them, wroth for his friend. But the vehement heart

Of Menoetius' son the Achaeans' valour awak'd,
And the Ajaxes first he address'd, tho' eager themselves:
'Ye Ajaxes, now let your hearts on resistance be set
As bravely as ever before or bravelier still;
Low lies he that first the Achaean rampart o'erleapt,
Sarpedon: could we but take and dishonour his corpse
And strip the arms from his shoulders and many a one
Of those that defend him slay with the pitiless bronze!'
So spake he, but they of themselves on resistance were set.

Then both the armies their phalanxes strengthen'd and dress'd,
Trojans and Lycians, Achaeans and Myrmidons, all,
And they clash'd together round dead Sarpedon and fought
With terrible shouts, and their harness rang with the blows.
But Zeus stretch'd hideous night o'er the murderous fray
And hideous made he the toil of the fight for his son:
First were the bright-eyed Achaeans thrust from their ground
When stricken was one of the best in the Myrmidon ranks,
Godlike Epeigeus, of royal Agacles the son;
In Bud'ion's bastion'd city once he had ruled
But, mischancing to slay his cousin, to Peleus he came
And Thetis the silvery-footed, a suppliant man,
And they sent him to follow Achilles, breaker of ranks,
And on Ilion's horse-rearing plain with the Trojans to fight.
Him now, as he grasp'd Sarpedon, Hector renown'd
Smote on the head with a stone, and broken in twain
Was the skull in his helmet and prone he fell on the corpse,
And death embrac'd him that quells the spirit of man;
And grief on Patroclus came for the fall of his friend,
And straight through the foremost fighters he rush'd like a
hawk,

Swiftest of birds, when on daws and starlings it swoops:
E'en so did Menoetius' son on the Lycians swoop
And the Trojans, wroth for his fallen comrade-in-arms,
And he smote Stheneläus, Ithaemenes' well-lov'd son,
On the neck with a stone and the tendons utterly broke.
And the foremost fighters and Hector withdrew them a space:
Far as the flight of a long spear, cast by a man
Trying his skill for a prize or aiming to strike
In the mellay of war, being press'd by furious foes,
So far did the Trojans retire by the Danaans driven.
And the chief of the Lycian shieldmen, Glaucus, was first
To turn in his flight and great-hearted Bathycles slew,
Chalcon's heir, that in Hellas dwelt for his home,
The richest in goods among all the Myrmidon folk:

Him full in the breast did Glaucus wound with a spear,
Suddenly wheeling as Bathycles rush'd in pursuit,
And he fell with a crash and strong grief seiz'd on his friends
For a good man down, but greatly the Trojans rejoic'd
And round him throng'd in a pack; yet the Danaans too
Forgot not their valour but bore their strength on the foe.

Then Meriones a man of the Trojans o'ercame,
Läogonus, valiant son of Onétor, the priest
Of Zeus Idaean revered by the folk as a god:
'Neath the jaw by the ear he smote him, and swiftly his soul
Departed, and loathly darkness upon him was shed.
But Aeneas his javelin hurl'd at Meriones,
Hoping to strike, as he mov'd, 'neath the guard of his shield,
But, keeping a wary watch, he avoided the spear
Stooping forward, and far behind him the spear
Lodg'd in the ground and the butt of it quivering stood,
For the might of the War-god had taken its fury away.
And Aeneas was vex'd in his heart and angrily spake:
'Ah, Meriones, skill'd dancer, full surely my spear,
Had it but struck thee, thy dancing for ever had stopp'd.'
And Meriones, fam'd spearman, answer'd and said:
'Nay, Aeneas, 'tis hard for thee, strong as thou art,
To quench the spirit of all that in battle may dare
To affront thee, for thou too art mortal, even as I.
If ever my brazen spear in thy vitals should strike,
Then quickly, for all thy valour and trust in thy hands,
The glory to me shouldst thou give and to Hades thy soul.'
He spake, but Menoetius' son rebuk'd him and said:
'Brave art thou, Meriones, why speakest thou thus?
Ah, friend! not for a gibe will the Trojans retreat
From the body: ere then shall the earth hold many in thrall!
In deeds is the issue of war, in counsel of speech:
Wherefore behoves us to fight, not multiply words.'
So led he the way for the godlike Meriones:
As rises the noise of woodcutters plying the axe
In mountain glades and the sound of them reaches afar,
So rose the din of the fight from the wide-way'd earth,
The thudding of bronze and of well-tann'd targes of hide
Smitten by sword or by two-headed spear, as they fought;
Nor would even a keen-sighted man Sarpedon have known
Any more, as he lay, for which blood and missiles and dust
Was he wholly cover'd, from head to the soles of his feet,
And still men swarm'd round his body, thick as the flies
That buzz round the brimming pails in a steading of kine

At the season of spring when the milk o'erflows in the pails.
So swarm'd they around Sarpedon, and never did Zeus
His shining eyes from the murderous mellay avert
But still look'd down on them, searching the thoughts in his
breast

And debating much on the death of Menoetius' son
Whether there and then, in the murderous mellay of war,
O'er divine Sarpedon glorious Hector should slay him
With bronze-headed spear and strip from his shoulders the arms,
Or still more hard for them all the toil he should make.

So ponder'd the Father and thus it seem'd to him good,
That the gallant squire of Achilles Pelëides
Should drive the Trojans and brazen-helmeted Hector
Back to the city and take from many their lives.
And first in Hector a faltering spirit he woke,
Who leapt to his chariot and turn'd it and call'd to the rest
To flee, for he knew that the scales in Heaven had dipp'd;
And the valiant Lycians also turn'd them to flight
When they saw their King, Sarpedon, pierc'd to the heart,
Lying in the ring of the dead, for many o'er him
Had fallen when Zeus drew tighter the shackles of strife:
But the Danaans stood and the shining armour of bronze
From Sarpedon stripp'd, and Menoetius' valiant son
To his comrades gave it to take to the camp by the ships.
Then did the Cloud-compeller Apollo address:

'Go, dear Phoebus, and take Sarpedon away
Clear of the darts, and the dark blood wash from his limbs,
And bear him afar, and in spring-waters bathe him and smear
With ambrosial oil, and clothe him in ageless attire,
And to Sleep and Death, twin brethren, our ministers swift,
Give him to convoy with speed and waft to his home
And lay him in far-spread Lycia's bounteous land,
That there his brothers and kin may his funeral make
And build him a tomb and a pillar, the dues of the dead.'
He spake, and Apollo straightway his father obey'd
And, from Ida descending, enter'd the terrible strife;
And, raising divine Sarpedon clear of the darts,
He bore him afar, and in spring-waters bathed him and smear'd
With ambrosial oil, and clothed him in ageless attire,
And to Sleep and Death, twin brethren, those ministers swift,
Gave him to convoy with speed, and they wafted him home
And laid him in far-spread Lycia's bounteous land.

But Patroclus call'd on his horses and charioteer
The Trojans and Lycians to chase, infatuate fool!

For, had he the bidding obey'd of Pelëides,
The fate of shadowy death he had surely escaped:
But ever the wisdom of Zeus is stronger than men,
For he drives the valiant flying and victory takes
Even from him that Himself has spurr'd to the fight;
And now in the breast of Patroclus courage he woke,
Whom first, whom last, O Patroclus, slewest thou then
In the day of thy fate, when the high Gods call'd thee to death?
Autonöus first and Adrastus, Echeclus next
And Perimus, Megas's son, Melanippus, Epistor,
And thereafter Elasmus, Mulius, goodly Pylartes;
These slew he, but each of the others bethought him of flight.
Then had the sons of Achaea sack'd by his hand
High-gated Troy, for he mightily raged with the spear,
But Phoebus Apollo stood on the bastion'd wall
With death in his heart for Patroclus and succour for Troy.
Thrice did Patroclus climb to a pier of the wall
And thrice did Apollo dash him down from the wall
Smiting with hands immortal his glittering shield;
But the fourth time, as he rush'd at the wall like a God,
With a terrible cry Apollo address'd him and said:
'Give back, Patroclus, and know thy measure of Fate;
Not by thy spear shall Troy's proud city be sack'd
Nor the spear of Achilles, a man far better than thou.'
So spake he, and many a step Patroclus retir'd
Avoiding the wrath of Apollo the far-shooting God.

Now Hector within the gateway his horses restrain'd,
Pondering whether again the battle to seek
Or summon the Trojans behind the shelter of walls;
And, while thus he debated, Apollo stood at his side
In the likeness of one that was young and a good man to fight,
Asius, uncle to Hector tamer of horses,
Being own brother of Hecuba, Dymas's son
That in Phrygia dwelt by the waters of Sangarius:
In semblance like Asius, Phoebus address'd him and spake:
'Hector, why shunnest thou battle? It little beseems:
Were I stronger than thou by as much as weaker I am,
Then shouldst thou soon to thy hurt from the battle refrain.
Drive thou thy strong-hoov'd horses Patroclus to slay
If haply Apollo may help thee and victory grant.'
So saying the God went back to the moil of the fight,
But glorious Hector commanded his charioteer
The horses to lash: and Apollo enter'd the press
Mid the ranks of the Argives and panic awoke in them all,

Dread panic, but glory he gave to Hector and Troy.
Now Hector let be all the others and none of them slew
But against Patroclus his strong-hoov'd stallions drove,
And Patroclus, opposite, leapt from his car to the ground:
In his left hand was his spear and a stone in his right
Shining and jagged but well conceal'd in his grasp,
And he hurl'd it, planting his feet, nor aim'd he amiss,
For Hector's charioteer in an instant it reach'd,
A bastard of glorious Priam, Kebriones,
Still holding the reins, and full on his forehead it smote,
And pounded were both his brows and the bone of his skull
Was smash'd by the flint, and his eye-balls fell to the ground
In the dust at his feet: and at once like a diver he pitch'd
From the well-wrought car and the spirit pass'd from his bones;
And the knightly Patroclus, taunting him, thus to him spake:
'Out on the nimble fellow, how neatly he dives!
If perchance on the teeming ocean a fisher he were,
Searching for oysters many a man might he feed
As he dived from a ship, how stormy soever the seas,
So lightly he tumbles out of his car to the plain:
The Trojans also have tumblers, as good as the best!'

So saying he set on the hero Kebriones
With the spring of a lion, that, worrying kine in their stall,
Is spear'd in the breast, for courage itself is his bane—
So he in his fury sprang on Kebriones,
And Hector, opposite, leapt from his car to the ground,
And the two join'd battle like lions for Kebriones
That fight on a mountain-crest for a hind they have kill'd,
Each driv'n by his hunger, each with invincible heart:
So they for Kebriones, two masters of war,
Patroclus Menoetius' son and Hector renown'd,
Were eager to hew at each other with pitiless bronze.
Now Hector had seiz'd his charioteer by the head,
And Patroclus over against him had hold of his foot,
And the rest of the Trojans and Danaans join'd in the fray:
As winds from the East and the South contend with each other
In a mountain-valley the trees of a forest to shake,
Beech-tree and ash and smooth-bark'd cornel they shake
Till the long boughs of the trees together are dash'd
With incredible din and a crackle of branches that break,
E'en so did Trojans and Danaans dash on each other
Slaying, and neither bethought them of ruinous flight;
And many a keen-pointed spear round Kebriones
Stood rooted, and winged arrows that leapt from the string,

And many a great stone also batter'd their shields
As round him they fought, but he in the whirl of the dust
Lay mighty and mightily fallen, his driving forgot.

So long as the Sun-god the midmost heaven bestrode,
So long did they strike at each other, and warriors fell,
But when wester'd the sun to the hour when oxen are loos'd,
Then, even beyond their fate, the Achaeans prevail'd:
Out of the darts and the tumult the hero they dragg'd
In spite of the Trojans and stripp'd from his shoulders the arms.
And Patroclus, with death in his heart, on the enemy leapt;
Thrice on the Trojans like furious Ares he rush'd
With terrible shouts, and thrice nine warriors he slew,
But the fourth time that he charg'd, in strength as a God,
Then was reveal'd to Patroclus the end of his life:
For Apollo strode through the battle, encountering him
In his dreadful power, tho' Patroclus knew not the God,
For unseen he mov'd through the mellay, hidden in mist,
And standing behind him he smote on his shoulders and back
With the flat of his hand, that his eyes went round in a swoon;
Then Phoebus Apollo the helmet struck from his head
And under the feet of the horses it roll'd with a clang,
The casque with its socketed plume, and the crests were defil'd
With blood and with dust: ere then had it never been known
That the horse-hair plume of the helmet with dust was defiled,
For the head and the beautiful face of a hero divine
It had ward'd before, but to Hector now was it giv'n
To wear on his brows, tho' to him destruction was near.
And the long-shadow'd spear of Patroclus broke in his hands,
Huge, massy, and strong, bronze-pointed; and down from him
fell

The tassell'd shield with its baldric and lay on the ground.
And the Lord Apollo loosen'd his corslet of mail,
And his wits were blinded and loos'd were his radiant limbs,
And he stood in a maze; but a Dardan man from behind
Smote him betwixt the shoulders with keen-pointed spear,
Euphorbus, Panthöus' son, the best of his years
In spearcraft and horsemanship, and in fleetness of foot:
Twenty Achaeans had he from their chariots hurl'd
That day, his first in the field, a novice in war,
And he now was the first Patroclus also to strike,
But, slaying him not, he at once ran back to the rear,
First snatching his weapon, and mix'd with the throng nor
abode

Patroclus's onset, disarm'd tho' he was for the fight.

And Patroclus, o'ercome by the spear and the stroke of the God,
To the ranks of his comrades retreated, avoiding his fate.

But Hector, as soon as the noble Patroclus he saw
Yielding his ground, being strick'n with the pitiless bronze,
Came near through the ranks and wounded him sore with his
lance

In the lowermost belly, and through him the point of it went,
And he fell with a crash and the Danaans mightily griev'd.
As a lion o'erpowers a boar, most dauntless of beasts,
When they fight for a little spring on the crest of a hill
With hearts unyielding, so eager to drink are they both,
And the lion his panting enemy kills by his strength,
So Hector, the son of Priam, bereft of his life
Menoetius' valiant son, that had multitudes slain,
And exulting over him, winged words to him spake:
'Patroclus, surely thou thoughtest my city to sack
And from Trojan women their day of freedom to take
And bring them in ships to thy own dear country afar.
Fond fool! To defend them were Hector's fleet-footed horses
Straining to join in the fight, and myself with the spear
'Mong the war-loving Trojans excel and ward from their lives
The day of thralldom: but thee shall vultures devour.

For all his valour Achilles avail'd not to save
When he stay'd at the ships and straitly charg'd thee and said:
"Patroclus, captain of horsemen, return not again
To the hollow ships till the doublet of manslaying Hector,
Stain'd with his blood, from about his breast thou hast torn."
So, surely, he spake and thy witless folly bemus'd.'
And with labouring breath Patroclus address'd him again:
'Boast, Hector, as now, for to thee is the victory given
By Cronos' son and Apollo, who lightly o'ercame
The strength of a mortal and stripp'd from my shoulders the
arms:

But if twenty such as art thou had met me in fight,
Here had all of them perish'd, subdued to my spear.
'Twas ruinous Fate and the son of Leda that slew
And of men Euphorbus, for thou hast slain but the slain.
Yet one word more will I say, do thou lay it to heart;
Not long shalt thou live thyself, for already I see
Death and o'ermastering Fate stand close at thy side
Till thou fall by the hand of Achilles, Aeacus' seed.'
He spake, and the end that is death o'ersadow'd his eyes
And his spirit fled from his limbs and to Hades was gone
Lamenting her lot and regretting manhood and youth:

But ev'n in his death great Hector address'd him again:
'Why, then, Patroclus, for me dost thou prophesy death?
Who knows if Achilles himself, fair Thetis's son,
May first be stricken by me and forfeit his life?'
So spake he and straightway, planting his foot on the dead,
Wrench'd out his weapon and flung the corpse on its back
And, striding along with his spear, Automedon sought,
The valiant squire of swift-footed Aeacides,
Eager to slay him, but Peleus' fleet-footed horses,
Immortal, the gift of the Gods, had borne him away.

*The battle rages all day round the body of Patroclus and
the Greeks are driven back on their camp.*

Now Atreus' son Menelaus, of Ares belov'd,
Fail'd not to mark that Patroclus in battle had fall'n,
And in gleaming bronze through the foremost fighters
he went

And the body bestrode, as a heifer, lowing, bestrides
Her first-born calf and the cares of motherhood learns:
E'en so fair-hair'd Menelaus the body bestrode
Holding before him his spear and the orb of his shield,
Eager to slay whosoe'er would affront him in fight.
Nor yet was Panthöus' son, of the good ashen spear,
Heedless of fallen Patroclus, but near him he stood
And thus Menelaus, belov'd of Ares, address'd:
'Atrides, foster'd of Zeus, that commandest the host,
Give back, and yield me the dead and the blood-spatter'd arms;
'Twas I and no other Trojan nor ally of Troy
That was first in the hard-fought mellay Patroclus to smite.
Suffer me then 'mong the Trojans the glory to win,
Lest I cast with my spear and of sweet life leave thee bereft.'
And, bitterly wroth, fair-hair'd Menelaus replied:
'Great Zeus! it beseems not a man o'er measure to boast;
Methinks neither spirit of pard nor lion nor boar,
That murderous beast of the wild whose obdurate heart
With fury swells in his breast most fiercely of all,
Can match the pride of these spearmen, Panthöus' sons.
Yet surely the great Hyperénor, tamer of horses,
No profit enjoy'd of his youth when he slighted my strength,
Abiding my onset, and deem'd me the meanest of all
The Danaan warriors, for not on his feet did he go
To gladden his wife and his noble parents at home.
So too thy pride will I quench if against me thou stand;
But I warn thee rather to get thee back to the throng
And with arms encounter me not, lest evil befall:
For even a fool can be wise when he knows the event.'
He spake but persuaded him not, and the other replied:
'Now shalt thou pay, Menelaus, foster'd of Zeus,
For the brother o'er whom thou hast boasted, slain by thy hand.

Thou hast widow'd his wife in her bridal chamber afar
And direful weeping and woe to his parents hast brought,
Yet quickly the tears shall I dry of those sorrowing ones
If only thy head and thy armour I carry away
And to Panthöus bring them and Phrontis, to lie in their hands.
But now no longer leave we the struggle untried,
The fight unfought, whether victory chance or defeat.'
So spake he and smote on the mighty orb of his shield
But brake not the bronze, for it turn'd the point of his spear
On the stubborn shield, and Atrides too with his spear,
Praying to Zeus in his need, made at him in turn
And pierc'd to the roots of his throat, as backward he stepp'd,
And follow'd the stroke of the spear with the weight of his
hands.

Sheer through his delicate neck the point of it went,
And he fell with a crash and his armour rattled on him;
Blood-drench'd was the hair that might match the Graces' in
sheen,

The close-plaited tresses entwin'd with silver and gold:
As a lusty sapling of olive is rear'd by a man
In a breeze-swept orchard where fountains plenteous spring,
And the shoot, fair-growing, is shaken by many a blast
Of every wind, yet in whitening blossom it breaks,
But suddenly comes there a wind with hurricane force
That shakes and uproots it and lays it stretch'd on the ground,
E'en so Euphorbus the spearman, Panthöus' son,
By King Menelaus was slain and despoil'd of his arms.

As a mountain lion at whiles in the pride of his strength
Seizes a grazing heifer, the best of a herd,
And crunches her neck, when his strong teeth fasten in her,
Then fiercely her blood and all her vitals devours
Rending her: dogs and herdsmen on every side
Bark and yell from afar, yet none of them dare
Come near to attack him, for pale fear masters them all,
E'en so not one of the Trojans dar'd in his heart
Come near to encounter Atreus' glorious son.
And easily might he the splendid armour have stripp'd
From Panthöus' son, but Apollo grudg'd it to him
When against him Hector, a peer of the War-god, he stirr'd,
Taking the semblance of Mentès, Ciconian chief,
And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
'Hector, cease to pursue what thou canst not attain,
The horses of Aeacides, immortal in breed;
Hard are they for a mortal to tame or to drive

Save Achilles only, the son of a mother divine.
But meanwhile brave Menelaus, of Ares belov'd,
Patroclus bestrides, and the best of the Trojans has slain,
Panthōus' son, and his fiery valour has stay'd.'

So speaking, the god re-entered the mellay of men,
But Hector's innermost soul was clouded with grief
And he ranged the ranks with his gaze and straightway was
ware

Of one man stripping the arms and another that lay
In the dust, where the dark blood well'd from his terrible
wound;

And Hector, in gleaming bronze, through the front of the fight
With his piercing war-cry like fire unquenchable swept,
Nor was Atreus' son Menelaus deaf to his cry
But, sorely troubled, his own great spirit address'd:
'Ah me! if now I shall leave these glorious arms
And Patroclus, lying in death my wrongs to avenge,
I fear lest some Danaan, seeing it, angry may be;
But if for my honour's sake into battle I go,
Then, one against many, by foes encompass'd I fight,
For hither the host of the Trojans with Hector advance.
But wherefore thus does my spirit debate with herself?
When against the power of Heaven one fights with a man
Whom a God exalts, swift trouble must roll on his head:
No Danaan then can be wroth, though he see me retire
Yielding to Hector who fights with Gods on his side.
Could I somewhere but find Telamonian Ajax afield,
Our strength we might join and in fierce-fought battle defy
Even the powers of Heaven, if so we might save
For Achilles his dead: for of evils that were the least.'

And while yet in his own great heart he debated thereon
The ranks of the Trojans advanc'd under Hector their chief,
And at once Menelaus retreated, leaving the corpse,
And this way and that like a deep-maned lion he turn'd
That watchdogs and herdsmen chase from a steading of kine
With missiles and cries, and within him his valiant heart
Grows chill, and he goes, tho' loath, from the fold of the kine:
E'en so fair-hair'd Menelaus withdrew from the dead
But turn'd him and stood when he came to the throng of his
friends,

Peering about him for Ajax, Telamon's son.
Him did he quickly espy on the left of the battle
Heart'ning his comrades and spurring them on to the fight,
For terrible panic had Phoebus spread in their ranks;

And he started to run, and halted beside him and spake:
'Quick, sweet Ajax, thy help! Bestir we ourselves
For Patroclus' sake, that his naked body at least
We may bring to Achilles; for Hector has taken his arms.'
He spake, and the spirit of prudent Ajax was stirr'd,
'And he strode through the front of the fight with the King at
his side.

Now Hector had stripp'd from Patroclus the glorious arms
And was dragging him off to sever his head from the trunk
And carry his body to Troy to give to the dogs,
When Ajax approach'd him bearing his shield like a tower,
And Hector again to the throng of his comrades retir'd
And mounted his car, but the goodly armour he gave
To the Trojans to take to the city, a glorious prize.
But Ajax his broad shield rais'd o'er Menoetius' son
And, bestriding him, stood like a lion defending his whelps
When suddenly hunters encounter him leading his young
In a forest glade and he waxes fierce in his might
And draws down his brows in wrinkles to cover his eyes:
E'en so did Ajax the hero Patroclus bestride,
While over against him Atrides, of Ares belov'd,
Stood nursing the mighty sorrow that swell'd in his breast.

But Glaucus, the Lycian chief, Hippolochus' son,
Frowning on Hector, assail'd him with words of reproach:
'Hector, in semblance our bravest, in action our least,
False is the fame of a craven, such as art thou:
Bethink thee how thou mayst save thy city and home
With none to support thee save only the Ilian-born.
For none of the Lycians surely will fight any more
For Ilion city, since thankless labour it seems
With warlike foemen to fight, not sparing ourselves.
How can a meaner man for deliverance hope
When a prince, Sarpedon, at once thy guest and thy friend,
Thou leavest a prey and a spoil to the Danaan men?
Tho' many a service he did to thy city and thee
While he liv'd, yet thou dardest not save him, dead, from the
dogs.

Wherefore, if now any Lycian hearken to me,
Home we shall go, and to Troy sheer doom will appear:
For if only a spark of the dauntless courage in you
Were burning that quickens the spirit of patriot men
When against their foes they array them in wearisome strife,
Soon should we carry Patroclus to Ilion's keep,
And if once to the high-wall'd city of Priam he came,

Dead tho' he be when we hale him out of the fight,
Sarpedon's glorious arms would the Danaans yield
Right quickly to us and his body to Ilion send,
So mighty a hero is he whose squire has been slain,
Their bravest and best, as his squires are also the best.
But courage has fail'd thee 'gainst great-hearted Ajax to stand
Or look in his face mid the shouts of war-faring men
Or wage fair battle with him, since thy better he is.'
And to him with a frown did bright-plum'd Hector reply:
'Glaucus, what speech o'erweening is this from a friend?
Out on it! once I deem'd thee in wisdom the best
Far above all that in deep-soil'd Lycia dwell:
But now is thy wisdom as naught, so foolish thy speech
When thou sayst that the might of Ajax I durst not withstand.
I quail not, I, at the battle or chariot's din:
But ever the wisdom of Zeus is stronger than men,
For he drives the valiant flying and victory takes
Even from him that Himself has spurr'd to the fight.
But come, friend, stand at my side and see for thyself
Whether all this day I shall play the craven in war
Or many a Danaan, fierce as his valour may be,
I shall teach for Patroclus fallen no longer to fight.'
Thereat with a mighty shout on the Trojans he call'd:
'Trojans and Lycians, Dardans that fight in the press,
Prove yourselves men nor your furious valour forget
Till the goodly armour of blameless Achilles I don
That I stripp'd from Patroclus, his squire, having slain him in
fight.'

So bright-plum'd Hector, and straightway went to the rear
Out of the strife and the battle and, running at speed,
Quickly his comrades o'ertook not far on the way
As they carried to Troy Pelides' glorious arms;
And, standing aloof from the battle, his armour he chang'd,
For his own to his comrades, the war-loving Trojans, he gave
To take into Troy, but Achilles' arms he did on,
The immortal arms that aforetime the Heavenly ones
To his father had giv'n, and his father when old to his son,
Tho' never that son grew old in the arms that he gave.

But when Zeus that gathers the clouds beheld him afar
Arraying himself in the armour of godlike Achilles,
Then, shaking his head, thus sadly he spake to his soul:
'Ah, hapless! of death no thought hast thou in thy heart,
Yet near thee it draws, tho' thou don the armour divine
Of a peerless hero that all men tremble to see.

His comrade, gentle and brave, thou hast slain on the field
And the arms from his head and his breast unmeetly hast
stripp'd:

Yet I grant for a while victorious strength to thy hand,
To make thee amends that from battle thou ne'er shalt return
To gladden Andromache's heart with the glorious arms.'
So spake Cronion and nodded his coal-black brows.

But on Hector the arms sat well, and into him pass'd
The War-god's terrible power, and with valour and strength
His limbs were inspir'd, and among the allies renown'd
He rush'd with a thunderous shout and appear'd to them all
In his flashing armour like Peleus' great-hearted son.
And each of the chiefs that he came to he hearten'd with words,
Mesthles and Glaucus and Medon and Thersilochus,
Deisenor and Asteropaeus and Hippothöus,
Chromius, Phorcys, and Ennomus augur renown'd;
In winged words he address'd them, spurring them on:
'Listen, ye countless tribes, that are allies of Troy,
'Twas not for numbers alone nor idle parade
That I summon'd each of you here from his city afar,
But that ye to the wives and the innocent children of Troy
'Gainst the war-loving sons of Achaea a bulwark might be;
Therefore it is that I grind my people in Troy
With levies of victuals, your warlike spirit to feed:
Let every man of you stand with his face to the foe
To die or to live, for such is the dalliance of war:
And whoso shall drag Patroclus, dead tho' he be,
'Mong the horse-taming Trojans, and Ajax bend to his will,
Half of the spoil will I give him, and half for myself
Will keep, and his glory shall equal be with my own.'
So spake he, and they went forward, pressing the charge
With levell'd spears, for the hope was high in their hearts
To drag the body from under Telamon's son,
Fond fools! for over it many he reft of their lives.
And Ajax, marking them, brave Menelaus address'd:
'Sweet friend, foster'd of Zeus, no longer I hope
That even ourselves we can save or from battle return.
'Tis not so much for the corpse of Patroclus I fear
That soon shall be glutting the dogs and vultures of Troy
As for thy head and for mine, lest evil betide,
So black is the cloud of war that o'er shadows us all
In Hector, for sheer destruction stares in our face;
Come now and call on the Danaan princes for help.'
So spake he, and good Menelaus shouted aloud

And far through the ranks of the Danaans made himself heard:
'Friends, captains, and counsellors all that in Argos have power,
Who beside the Atridae, King Agamemnon and me,
Drink at the public cost and the armies command
And honour and glory from Zeus attend upon you,
'Tis hard to distinguish the faces of all that are chiefs,
So fierce is the strife that blazes on every hand:
Let each man call on himself, and count it a sin
If Patroclus a sport for the dogs of Troyland should be.'

He spake and by Ajax Öileus clearly was heard,
Who was first to run through the mellay to answer his call,
And next Idomeneus came with his comrade-in-arms,
Meriones, like the manslaying War-god in might;
But the names of the others who shall remember or tell
That after them came and the Danaan battle awak'd?
The Trojans charg'd in a pack under Hector their chief:
As when at the mouth of a river nurtur'd from heaven
A mighty wave 'gainst the current dashes and roars
And every headland re-echoes the surge of the sea,
So loud was their cry as they charg'd; but the Danaan men
Stood firm round Menoetius' son, in spirit as one,
Making a wall with their shields. And Zeus from on high
Spread o'er their radiant helmets a darkness of mist,
For dearly aforetime Menoetius' son he had lov'd
While yet in his life he was squire to Aeacides,
And he grudg'd that his foes should make him a prey for the
dogs
Of Troyland and stirr'd his comrades to battle for him.

Now first the bright-eyed Achaeans were thrust from their
ground
And abandon'd the body and fled, yet none of them all
Did the Trojans slay with their spears, tho' eager they were,
For themselves were haling the body: but short was the time
That the Danaans left them for respite, for quickly their ranks
Were rallied by Ajax, in presence and prowess the best
Of all the Achaeans save blameless Pelöides.
Straight through the front of the battle he dash'd in his rage
Like a wilding boar of the mountain that, turning at bay,
Easily scatters in flight both hunters and dogs:
E'en so did the glorious Ajax, Telamon's son,
The Trojan phalanxes easily scatter and rout
That throng'd round Patroclus and fain his body would hale
To their own city and glory win for themselves.
Just then was Pelasgian Lethus's glorious son,

Hippothöus, dragging the corpse through the mellay of men
By the foot, having tied round the ankle-tendons a thong,
To pleasure the Trojans and Hector; but swiftly his bane
Found him and none could avert it, tho' eager they were;
For him did Telamon's son, as he rush'd through the press,
Smite through his bronze-cheek'd helmet from close at his side,
And the socketed head-piece split round the point of the bronze
'Neath the force of the stalwart arm and the ponderous spear
And brains and blood down the spear-shaft gush'd from the
wound,

And his strength was at once unstrung and out of his hands
The foot of Menoetius' son he let fall to the earth;
And he lay on his face, a dead man stretch'd on the dead,
Far from Larissa his home, nor his parents repaid
The cost of his nurture, for brief was the span of his life
When at great-hearted Ajax's hand he fell by the spear.

Then Hector at Ajax his gleaming javelin cast,
But he saw it in time and avoided, tho' hardly, the bronze,
And it lighted on Schedius, Iphitus' great-hearted son,
The best of the Phocians by far, that in Pánopeus dwelt
And was King in his splendid palace o'er many a man:
'Neath the collar-bone he was struck, and the point of the spear
Where it pass'd through the shoulder-joint stood out of his
back,

And he fell with a crash and his armour rattled on him.
And Ajax in turn slew Phorcys, Phaenops's son,
Who bestrode Hippothöus' corpse: on his belly he smote
And shatter'd the corslet-plate and his belly let out,
And he fell in the dust and clutch'd at the earth with his palm;
And the foremost fighters and glorious Hector retir'd,
And the Argives shouted aloud and, dragging away
Phorcys and Hippothöus, despoil'd them of arms.
Then would the Trojans in turn faint-hearted have fled,
Driv'n by the warlike Achaeans, to Ilion's walls,
And the Argives glory have won o'er their measure of fate
By their own prowess and strength: but Apollo himself
Aeneas arous'd in the semblance of Periphas old
Épytus' son—Anchises' herald was he
That had grown to age in his service and cherish'd his son—
Like him Apollo address'd Aeneas and said:
'Aeneas, how could ye hold 'gainst the will of the God
The walls of Ilion? Many ere now have I seen
That have trusted their prowess and strength and their valorous
hearts

And their own forces, tho' few in numbers they were:
But now tho' Cronion had liefer the victory give
To us than to them, ye fight not, abash'd and afraid.'
Aeneas heard him and knew far-shooting Apollo
When he look'd in his face, and to Hector cried he aloud:
'Hector and all ye others, captains of Troy
Or her allies, shame were it now faint-hearted to flee,
Driv'n by the warlike Achaeans, to Ilion's walls;
For thus speaks one of the Gods who stands at my side
That Zeus most High our helper will be in the fight.
Therefore charge we the Danaans nor suffer at least
That unhinder'd they carry Patroclus back to the ships.'

So spake he and far to the front of his comrades he leapt,
And the Trojans rallied and stood, the Achaeans to face,
And Aeneas, aiming his spear, Lëocritus smote,
Arisbas's son, Lycomédes' comrade in arms,
And, ev'n as he fell, Lycomedes griev'd for his friend
And, standing beside him, his gleaming javelin cast
At Hippasus' son Apisäon, shepherd of men,
And smote him under the midriff and loosen'd his knees:
Paeonia's deep-soil'd valley had sent him to Troy,
And he, after Asteropaeus, their best was in fight.
Now warlike Asteropaeus had pity for him,
And forward he rush'd and would fain the Achaeans have
fought,

But that no longer might be, for their shields were a wall
Where around Patroclus they stood and levell'd their spears;
For Ajax ranged through their ranks with words of command
Bidding them not to retire or abandon the corpse
Nor yet in front of their comrades, or singly, to fight
But to close their ranks o'er the body, supporting each other.
So great Ajax commanded, and wet grew the earth
And crimson with blood where thickly they fell in a ring,
Trojans and great-hearted allies, slain in the press;
And the Danaans too, no bloodless battle they fought
Tho' fewer they lost remembering Ajax's word
To fend sheer death from each other, closing their ranks.

So fought they like blazing fire, nor wouldst thou have
deem'd
That sun or moon any more still rode in the heav'n,
For o'er all the battle, where round Menoetius' son
The chieftains stood, was a pall of darkness o'erspread,
But all the rest of the Trojan and Danaan hosts
In a clear air fought, at their ease, and the beams of the sun

Shed brilliant light, and cloud there was none to be seen
O'er all the earth or the hills, and they rested at whiles
From the fight and avoided each other's dolorous darts,
Standing apart from the strife; but those in the midst
Were afflicted with darkness and battle and tired with the
weight

Of their arms of pitiless bronze. Yet two of the best,
Antilochus brave and Thrasymed, glorious youths,
Knew not Patroclus was dead but thought of him still
As alive and facing the Trojans in front of the press;
For, watching against their comrades' death or defeat,
They were fighting apart from the rest, as Nestor had charg'd
When he sent them forth from the ships to war on the plain.

So all day long the arduous toil of the strife
Wax'd, and the sweat of battle unceasingly pour'd
Over the knees and the shins and the feet of them all
And their hands and eyes were befoul'd as this way and that
For the gallant squire of swift-foot Achilles they fought.
As when in a farmstead a husbandman gives to his hinds
A great bull's hide to be stretch'd, all dripping with fat,
And they take it and stand in a circle and strain it by force,
And straightway the moisture departs and the grease enters in
As they tug at the hide, till throughout it is thoroughly
stretch'd,

So they, the Trojans and Danaans, tugg'd at the corpse
Scarce shifting their ground, for the hope was high in their
hearts

To drag him either to Troy or back to his own
By the hollow ships, and around him the tumult of fight
Wax'd wild, nor would Ares himself or Athena have scorn'd
That struggle to see, tho' exceeding great were their rage.

So dread was the toil and the moil of horses and men
That Zeus ordain'd o'er Patroclus: but godlike Achilles
The tidings knew not as yet that his comrade was dead,
For far away from the swift-going ships did they fight
'Neath Ilion's walls, and he never thought in his heart
That Patroclus was dead, but that, once the gates he had
reach'd,

He would quickly return, and alive, nor deem'd he at all
That Troy he should sack without him nor yet with his help;
For thus he had learn'd from his mother when often apart
The purpose of great Cronion she told in his ear,
But the evil that now was accomplish'd she never reveal'd
To her son, that the dearest of all his comrades was dead.

But the fighters around his body unceasingly strove
With their pointed spears, assailing and slaying each other,
And thus would a mail-clad Achaean his fellows address:
'Friends, 'twere indeed inglorious for us to return
To the hollow ships: let the black earth yawn at our feet
And swallow us up, for that would be better by far
If we to the horse-taming Trojans the body must yield
To drag into Troy and the glory win for themselves.'
And thus would a great-hearted Trojan utter his thought:
'Friends, tho' fated it were that all of us here
Should fall o'er Patroclus, let none give back from the fray.'
So would they speak, and they stirr'd the spirit of each
And fought, and the iron din through the waste of the sky
Ceaselessly rose to the brazen heaven above.

But the horses of Aeacides, aloof from the fray,
Stood weeping when once they were ware of their charioteer
'Neath the hand of man-slaying Hector fall'n in the dust;
Oft did their driver, Dióres' valiant son
Automedon, ply them with stinging blows of the lash,
And often with gentle words, or with chiding, address'd,
But they neither back to the ships on the broad Hellespont
Were willing to go nor to enter the battle again,
But ev'n as a funeral pillar immovable stands
Marking the burial-place of a man or a wife,
So they unmov'd with the beautiful chariot stood
Bowing their heads to the earth, and down from their eyes
The hot tears rain'd as they mourn'd for their charioteer;
And their lordly manes from under the yoke-cushion slipp'd
And on either side of the yoke were defil'd in the dust.
But Zeus, when he saw them mourning, had pity on them
And, shaking his head, thus sadly his spirit address'd:
'Ah! hapless pair, why gave we you two as a gift
To Peleus a mortal, when ageless and deathless ye are?
Was it to share in the sorrows of piteous men?
For nothing there is than a man more miserable
Of all the creatures that breathe and creep on the earth
But this will I never suffer, that Hector should drive
You and your daedal chariot, prince tho' he be,
For enough can he boast possessing the glorious arms.
Strength again will I breathe in your knees and your hearts
That out of the fight Automedon safe ye may bring
To the hollow ships; for victory still will I give
To Hector and Troy till they come to the well-timber'd ships
And the sun go down and the sacred darkness prevail.'

So speaking he breath'd in the horses courage and strength
And straightway the dust from their manes they shook to the
earth

And swiftly the chariot drew among foemen and friends,
And behind them, tho' stricken with grief, Automedon fought
Darting about like a vulture swooping on geese;
For lightly at times from the din of the fray he would flee
And lightly again would pursue through the press of the fight,
Yet never a man did he slay when he dash'd in pursuit,
For, driving alone in a chariot, can no man achieve
Both to fight with the spear and the fleet-footed horses to guide.
But at last espied him his comrade, Alcimedon,
Son of Lærces the son of Haemon, and he,
Standing behind his chariot, hail'd him and spake:
'Automedon, who of the gods has put in thy heart
Such a profitless thought, and thy wisdom taken away,
That thou fightest alone 'gainst the Trojans in front of the
press?

Thy comrade is slain and Hector, his slayer, exults
To wear on his shoulders the armour of Aeacides.'
And Diores' son Automedon answer'd and said:
'Alcimedon, who of us all is so skilful as thou
The fiery strength of immortal horses to guide
Save Patroclus only, in counsel a peer of the gods
While yet he was living, but Fate and Death have him now?
Take thou the whip and the shining reins from my hands,
And I, dismounting, will fight with the Trojans afoot.'

He spake, and at once Alcimedon leapt on the car,
And quickly the whip and the reins he grasp'd in his hands
And his comrade alighted: but glorious Hector had mark'd
And straightway address'd Aeneas close at his side:
'Aeneas, of bronze-mail'd Trojans a counsellor sage,
Look now! here are the horses of swift-foot Achilles
Come forth to the battle with feeble charioteers;
These might I hope to capture if thou in thy heart
Art willing to help, since they never would dare to abide
The assault of us two or to stand and do battle with us.'
So Hector, and brave Aeneas his bidding obey'd,
And forward they went, their shoulders shielded with hide
Well-tann'd and tough and with bronze on the hide overlaid,
And beside them godlike Arétus and Chromius went,
Charioteers, and high was the hope in their breasts
The drivers to slay and the strong-neck'd horses to take,
Fond hope! since Fate ordain'd them no easy return

Nor a bloodless fight, for to Zeus Automedon pray'd
And was fill'd in his innermost heart with valour and strength
And thus to his faithful friend, Alcimedon, spake:
'Alcimedon, hold not the horses too distant from me,
But let them breathe on my back, for never, methinks,
Will Hector the son of Priam his fury abate
Till behind Aeacides' deep-maned horses he mount
After slaying us two, and the ranks of the Danaans drive
Dismay'd or himself 'mong the foremost fall in the fight.'
And then to the Ajaxes both and Atrides he call'd:
'Ye Ajaxes, chiefs of the Argives, and King Menelaus,
Hark now! commit ye the body to those that may best
Bestride and defend it and ward our enemies off,
But from us that are living avert ye the pitiless day;
For here in the dolorous battle, pressing us hard,
Are Aeneas and Hector, of all the Trojans the best.
Howbeit the issue must lie on the knees of the gods;
I will cast, I also, and Zeus shall speed it, or not.'

So spake he and brandish'd and cast his long-shadow'd spear,
And full on the rounded shield of Arétus it struck
Which check'd not the point, for the bronze drave on thro' the
shield

And, piercing the corslet, low in his belly was fix'd;
As when with a sharp-edg'd axe a sinewy man,
Striking behind the horns of an ox of the field,
Cleaves through his neck and the ox leaps forward and falls,
So leapt he forward and fell on his back, but the spear
Quivering stuck in his entrails and loosen'd his limbs.
And Hector in turn took aim at Automedon,
But, keeping a wary watch, he avoided the spear
Stooping forward, and far behind him the bronze
Lodg'd in the ground and the butt of it quivering stood,
For the might of the War-god had taken its fury away.
Then had they closed with their swords and at hand-to-hand
fought,

But their duel was speedily ended, tho' eager they were,
When the Ajaxes came at their comrade's call through the press
And before them the Trojans at once shrank back to the rear,
Aeneas and Hector and Chromius, fearing those two;
But Aretus they left there lying, wounded to death,
And Automedon, peer of the War-god in swiftness and strength,
Stripp'd off his arms and exulting over him cried:
'I have verily eas'd now a little my heart of its grief
For Menoetius' son, tho' a meaner man I have slain.'

So spake he and laid the bloodstain'd arms in his car,
And himself, with his feet and his hands all dabbled with gore
Like a lion gorg'd with his victim, mounted again.

And then Cronion his tassell'd aegis assum'd,
Glittering bright, and o'erclouded Ida with storm
And lighten'd and thunder'd, and, shaking his aegis with power,
To the Trojans victory gave, to the Danaans rout.
Peneleos first, a Boeotian, began the defeat
Tho' ever a foremost fighter, when Polydamas
Smote on the point of his shoulder, casting from near
With a grazing blow, and the bone was scrap'd by the bronze.
And Hector next young Læitus smote on the wrist,
Alectryon's son, and his joy in battle was gone,
And peering about him he fled as hoping no more
To hold a spear in his hand or fight with the foe.
But, as Hector rush'd in pursuit, Idomeneus smote
On his corslet over the nipple but wounded him not,
For the javelin broke at the head; and the Trojans with joy
Shouted, and Hector in turn at Idomeneus
Aim'd, as he mounted his chariot, but Coeranus hit,
Comrade of Meriones and his charioteer,
Who from Lycton's citadel-town had accompanied him.
Now he, Idomeneus, enter'd the battle on foot
That day and a signal triumph to Troy would have giv'n,
But Coeranus drove to his help with his fleet-footed team
And deliverance brought and averted the pitiless day
But himself to man-slaying Hector yielded his life:
'Neath the jaw and the ear he was struck, and the point of the
spear

Shatter'd his teeth and sever'd his tongue in the midst,
And he fell from the chariot, dropping the reins to the ground,
But Meriones with his own hands gather'd them up
O'er the side of the car, and a word to Idomeneus spake:
'Lay on with the lash till thou come to the swift-going ships,
For thou knowest thyself that victory passes from us.'
He spake, and the fair-maned steeds Idomeneus lash'd
And drove to the ships, for terror had seiz'd on his soul.

Now Ajax also and King Menelaus had mark'd
How Zeus for the Trojans the scales of victory dipp'd,
And first was the great Telamonian Ajax to speak:
'Ay me! Menelaus, now may the veriest fool
Know that the Father himself is helping our foes:
Their javelins all strike home, whosoever may cast
Weakling or hero, for Zeus still guides them aright,

While our own, tho' cast by our best, fall idly to earth.
But come now, some excellent counsel let us devise
Both to hale the body away and ourselves to return
Alive to the hollow ships and a joy to our friends,
Who must grieve as hither they gaze, expecting no more
The fury of man-slaying Hector's invincible hand
To pause or refrain ere destruction fall on the ships.
Would that some comrade we had with the tidings to run
To Achilles, since even yet he has heard not, methinks,
The dolorous tale that his dearest comrade is slain;
But where alack! shall I look for a messenger here
For shrouded in darkness are we, both horses and men?
O Zeus! deliver from darkness the sons of Achaea
And show us the sunshine and grant us to see with our eyes:
Slay us at least in the light, if slay us thou must.'
He spake, and the Father was griev'd to see him in tears
And scatter'd the darkness and roll'd the mist from the plain
And the sun shone forth and all the battle was clear.
And then spake Ajax to brave Menelaus again:
'Look now afield, Menelaus nurtur'd of Zeus,
If Nestor's son Antilochus yet be alive,
And urge him to run to the wise Achilles with speed
And announce that the dearest by far of his comrades is slain.'

So spake he, and good Menelaus his bidding obey'd
And went as a lion goes from a steading of kine
Being tired with ceaselessly vexing herdsman and dogs
That suffer him not the fatling to take of the herd,
Night-long watching: the lion, lusting for blood,
Makes onset yet nothing he gets, so thickly the darts
Hurl'd by venturous hands fly whizzing about
With blazing brands that for all his fury he dreads,
And at dawn he goes from the steading, grieving at heart:
E'en so did brave Menelaus, loath in his heart,
From Patroclus go, for he fear'd lest the Danaan men
In a wild panic should leave him a prey to the foe,
And the Ajaxes straitly he charg'd, and Meriones:
'Ye Ajaxes, Danaan captains, and Meriones,
Let each of you now the gentle spirit recall
Of hapless Patroclus, how kind to his comrades he was
While he liv'd, whom now strong Fate and Death have o'er-
ta'en.'

So spake fair-hair'd Menelaus and straightway was gone;
And he glanced o'er the field like an eagle, counted by men
The keenest of sight of the birds that fly under heav'n,

Whom ev'n in his æery flight the fleet-footed hare
Eludes not, tho' crouch'd in a bush, but on her he swoops
In an instant and seizes her, making a spoil of her life:
So in that hour Menelaus, foster'd of Zeus,
His bright eyes swept o'er the ranks of the Danaan men
If Nestor's son yet alive he might see on the field.
Him did he quickly espy on the left of the battle
Heartening his comrades and spurring them on to the fight,
And he hasten'd and stood at his side and a word to him spake:
'Come hither and learn, Antilochus foster'd of Zeus,
Woofullest tidings: would that it never had been!
Already thine own eyes' witness has told thee, methinks,
That ruin o'erwhelming some God on the Danaans rolls
And victory gives to the Trojans, for fall'n is our best,
Patroclus, and sorrow o'er measure upon us is come.
Run now swiftly and tell Achilles of this
At the ships, that his comrade's body he straightway may save,
His naked body, for Hector has taken his arms.'
But he, Antilochus, sicken'd the message to hear;
Long time speechless he stood, grief-stricken, and tears
Well'd from his eyes, and chok'd was his utterance clear,
Yet even so did he heed Menelaus' command
And started to run, and his arms to Læodocus
His comrade he gave, who was wheeling his chariot near.
So him did his feet bear weeping out of the fight
Carrying evil tidings to Pelæides.

But the heart of King Menelaus brook'd not to stay
And succour the toil-spent comrades of Antilochus
When he went on his errand, and grief on the Pylia fell.
But godlike Thrasymed sent he to help them at need
And himself return'd and the hero Patroclus bestrode
And stood by the Ajaxes' side and a word to them spake:
'Yon man have I sent e'en now to the Danaan ships
With tidings for swift-foot Achilles, yet think not that he,
For all his anger with godlike Hector, will come,
For how shall he fight without arms 'gainst the forces of Troy?
But let us devise some excellent plan of our own
Both to hale Patroclus away and ourselves to return,
From Death escaping and Fate and the onset of Troy.'
And to him did great Telamonian Ajax reply:
'All this, most glorious King, thou hast spoken aright,
But do thou and Meriones put shoulder to him
And lift him and carry him swiftly out of the fray,
And we in the rear with the Trojans and Hector will fight,

One in heart as in name, since ever of old
We have stood by each other and fierce-fought battle abode,
He spake, and the others, grasping the dead in their arms,
Mightily rais'd him on high, but the Trojans behind
Shouted aloud, when they saw them lifting the corpse,
And charged like hounds when they leap to the front of the ring
To fall on a wounded boar that the hunters beset—
At first they rush on the quarry to rend him alive,
But anon, when trusting his prowess he turns him at bay,
Then, quickly retreating, they scatter on every side:
E'en so for a while did the Trojans rush in a pack
And harry them, plying their swords and their two-headed
spears,
But, whenever the Ajaxes turn'd on them, standing their
ground,

Then all their colour was chang'd and none of them dar'd
To dart from the ranks, nor battle would do for the dead.
So struggled those two with the body from out of the fray
To the hollow ships, and ever the stress of the fight
Wax'd fiercer, like fire that falls on a city of men
And suddenly breaks into flame and the houses devours
With its dreadful blaze, as it roars in the blast of the wind:
E'en so did the din of the horses and warfaring men
Unceasingly roar round the heroes bearing the corpse.
As mules put forth in their draught invincible strength
When down some bouldery track on a mountain they haul
A beam or a huge ship's timber, and tir'd are their hearts
With labour and sweat as they tug at their difficult load,
So struggled they, bearing the body. But two in their rear,
The Ajaxes, held their ground, as the waters are held
By a ridge of woodland that all its length on a plain
Stretches and stays great rivers from wasting the land
And turns their wandering channels to flow through the plain
And cannot be broken by all the strength of the streams:
So did the Ajaxes hold the Trojans' attack
Who follow'd them still, and among them two were the first,
Anchises' son, Aeneas, and Hector renown'd.
As flees a timorous flock of starlings or daws
Confusedly screaming, when flying afar they espy
A falcon, to all small birds the bearer of death,
So shrank the Achaeans before Aeneas and Hector
Confusedly crying, and joy of battle forgot;
And thickly the arms of the Danaans fell by the trench
As they fled, but never a pause in the battle there was.

Patroclus' body is brought back to the ships and Achilles mourns for him, and Hephaestus the Fire-god makes new armour for Achilles.

So fought those others like blazing fire on the plain
 While, fleet of foot, Antilochus sped on his errand;
 And he found Achilles in front of the high-beak'd ships
 Boding within him the things already fulfill'd.
 And Achilles, troubled, his own great spirit address'd:
 'Ay me! why do the long-hair'd Achaeans again
 Throng to the ships and in panic fly from the field?
 Sorely I dread lest the gods be bringing to pass
 The ills that my mother foretold that day when she said
 That yet in my lifetime the best of the Myrmidon men
 'Neath the Trojans' hands should forsake the light of the sun.
 Surely Menoetius' valiant son must be dead,
 Foolhardy man! for I bade him beat off the fire
 And return to the ships, not fight with Hector amain.'
 And, while yet in his own great heart he debated thereon,
 E'en then did the son of kinglike Nestor approach
 Bitterly weeping, and told his tidings of woe:
 'Son of Peleus, alack! for now shalt thou hear
 Grievous tidings: would that it never had been!
 Patroclus is fallen, and round his body they fight,
 His naked body, for Hector has taken his arms.'
 So spake he, and grief's black cloud Achilles enwrapp'd
 And with both his hands he gather'd and cast o'er his head
 Soot-grimed ashes, defiling his beautiful face,
 And over his sweet-scented doublet the dust of them clung;
 And himself in the ashes, mighty and mightily fallen,
 He grovell'd, and tore and befoul'd his hair with his hands.
 And his bondwomen also, the captives of many a raid,
 In the grief of their hearts cried loudly, and out of the hut
 Ran flocking around Pelides, and all with their palms
 Beat on their breasts, and their knees beneath them were loos'd,
 And over against them, in tears, was Antilochus
 Holding Achilles' hands as he moan'd in his grief,
 For he fear'd lest the edge of his sword he should lay on himself.
 But Achilles' terrible moans by his mother were heard

As she sat by the Ancient's side in the depths of the sea,
And shrilly she cried and the Goddesses gather'd around,
All the daughters of Nereus that dwelt in the deep.
With these was the bright cave fill'd, and together they all
Beat on their breasts, while Thetis began the lament:
'Listen, ye sister Nereids, that well ye may know,
All of you here, the sorrows that weigh on my soul.
Ah me, unhappy! ah me, in my motherhood curs'd,
Tho' my son be a hero! I bore him noble and strong,
Peerless, a prince among men: like a sapling he grew,
Like a shoot in a fruitful garden, rear'd by my care,
And I sent him with high-beak'd ships to Ilion's strand
To fight with the Trojans, but never in Phthia again,
In the house of Peleus his father, shall welcome him home.
And while yet he lives and beholds the light of the sun,
Grief is his portion and I can succour him not;
Yet even so will I go and see him, and learn
What sorrow has come, tho' he holds him aloof from the war.'
So spake she and left the cavern, and with her the nymphs
Went weeping, and round them the surging wave of the sea
Parted, but soon as to deep-loam'd Troyland they came,
They went up the strand in their order where thickly were
beach'd

Round swift-foot Achilles the ships of the Myrmidon men.
And his goddess-mother approach'd him where loudly he
moan'd

And clasp'd with a grief-stricken cry the head of her son
And with pitying voice in winged words to him spake:
'Why weepest thou, child? What sorrow is this that has come?
Hide thou it not, for one prayer granted has been
By the Father, of all that aforetime thou askedst of him,
That the sons of the Danaans penn'd in their leaguer should be
For lack of Achilles, and suffer insult and shame.'
And, heavily groaning, swift-foot Achilles replied:
'All that thou sayst, dear mother, accomplish'd has been;
But where is my joy in it all when my comrade is dead,
Patroclus, the friend whom I lov'd and honour'd the most,
Lov'd as my soul? Now Hector has slain him and stripp'd
From his shoulders the beautiful armour, a wonder to see,
The glorious gift that the gods on Peleus bestow'd
The day that they gave thee, a Goddess, in wedlock to him.
Would thou hadst then with the nymphs immortal abode,
Thy sisters, and Peleus a mortal consort had wed!
But now mayst thou look for sorrow a thousandfold more

In the death of thy son, whom thou never shalt welcome again
 Return'd to his home, since my spirit forbids me to live
 Or longer abide among men unless by my spear
 Hector shall first be stricken and yield me his life
 To pay for the death of Patroclus, Menoetius' son.'
 And Thetis, weeping, in answer address'd him and said:
 'Swift-doom'd thou art of a truth, if it be as thou sayst,
 For with Hector's slaying death is appointed for thee.'
 And Achilles, troubled at heart, to his mother replied:
 'Quick be my death, since I might not succour my friend
 In the hour of his slaying, when far from his country he fell
 Lacking the help of my arm to defend him from doom,
 For now to my own dear land shall I never return
 Since Patroclus and others my comrades I saved not from death,
 All that to godlike Hector have yielded their lives,
 But I sit by the ships a profitless burden of earth,
 Being better than any of all the mail-clad Achaeans
 In war, tho' in council others are better than I.
 Perish strife, among Gods and mortals alike,
 And wrath, that to bitterness stirs e'en the wisest of men,
 Wrath, that is sweeter than honey distill'd from the comb,
 And mounts in the breast of a man like the rising of smoke!
 E'en so did King Agamemnon provoke me to wrath;
 But bygones leave we to be, in spite of our grief,
 Bending the heart in our breast to Necessity's yoke.
 Now go I to meet the destroyer of him that I lov'd,
 Hector, and death I accept when the Father may will
 And all the other Immortals to bring it to pass.
 Not even the might of Hercules death could escape,
 Most dear tho' he was to the Father, Cronian Zeus,
 But by Fate and the cruel anger of Hera he fell;
 So also shall I, if the like be fashion'd for me,
 Lie sleeping in death, but ere then a glorious name
 Would I win me, and set some deep-bosom'd woman of Troy,
 Some daughter of Dardanus, wiping with both her hands
 The tears from her delicate cheeks and lamenting aloud,
 That so they may know that the tarrier now has return'd.
 Do thou then hold me not back, tho' thou lovest me well.'
 And Thetis, the silvery-footed, answer'd and said:
 'Yea, verily, child, for indeed no evil it is
 To ward sheer doom from thy comrades wearied with war;
 But thy goodly armour among the Trojans is held,
 The radiant armour of bronze, and Hector it is
 That flaunts it now on his breast; yet I deem not that he

Shall glory for long, for Death walks close at his side.
But do thou, child, enter not yet the mellay of war
But refrain till thou see me returning to thee at the ships:
I shall come to thee early to-morrow, at rising of sun,
And from Lord Hephaestus glorious arms shall I bring.'

So speaking the Goddess turn'd to go from her son
And, ev'n as she turn'd, her Nerëid sisters address'd:
'Do ye go down to the wide abyss of the deep
To our father, the Ancient, and seek him again in his home
And tell ye him all: but to high Olympus will I
To Hephaestus the far-fam'd Fire-god, and ask him to make
Glorious shining arms for Achilles my son.'
She spake, and at once 'neath the deep-sea surges they plung'd,
And Thetis the silvery-footed heavenward soar'd
To ask for the glorious arms of Achilles her son.

So she to Olympus was gone. But the Danaan hosts
With terrible cries by man-slaying Hector were driven
Flying, till they came to the ships and to Hellé's sea:
Not yet had the mail-clad Achaeans deliverance found
Nor rescued the squire of Achilles out of the darts,
For again o'ertook him the host and the horses of Troy
And Hector the son of Priam, in strength as a fire.
Thrice great Hector seiz'd on his feet from behind
To drag him away, and cried to the Trojans aloud,
And thrice did the Ajaxes, cloth'd in furious strength,
Beat Hector off from the corpse; but trusting his might
He, unshaken, would charge on the mellay or stand
Mightily shouting, but gave ground never at all.
As when from a carcass herdsmen avail not to scare
A furious lion, raging with hunger, away,
So all in vain did the valiant Ajaxes strive
To frighten the son of Priam away from the dead.

And quickly had Hector renown unspeakable won,
But to Pelëides fleet Iris, shod with the wind,
Came speeding down from Olympus, bidding him arm,
Unknown of Zeus and the others save Hera that sent,
And stood at his side and in winged words to him spake:
'Bestir thee, Achilles; arise, thou redoubtable man,
And succour Patroclus for whom dread strife is afoot
In front of the ships, where the fighters are slaying each other,
The Achaeans on one side guarding the corpse of the dead,
The Trojans fierce in their striving to hale him again
To windy Ilion, and glorious Hector in chief
Is eager to hale him, for fain would he sever his head

From his delicate neck and impale it high on the wall.
Arise then and lie no longer, but count it a sin
That Patroclus a sport to the dogs of Troyland should be:
Thine were the shame if mangled he go to the dead.'
And swift-foot godlike Achilles to Iris replied:
'Nay, Iris, but who of the gods has sent thee to me?'
And him did fleet-footed Iris in answer address:
'Twas Hera that sent me, the glorious consort of Zeus,
She only; the high-thron'd Father knows not of this
And none of the others round snowy Olympus that dwell.'
And her did swift-foot Achilles answer again:
'How shall I enter the mellay when they have my arms?
My mother forbade me e'en now to arm for the fight
Till I saw her again with my eyes come back to the ships,
For goodly arms from the Fire-god she promis'd to bring.
None other I know whose battle-gear I might wear
Save only the shield of Ajax, Telamon's son,
But himself, methinks, is afield in the front of the fray,
Slaying the foe with his spear and defending the dead.'

And him did fleet-footed Iris answer again:
'Well we know it ourselves that thy armour is lost:
But go to the trench as thou art, and show thyself there,
If haply the Trojans may fear and from battle refrain
And the warlike sons of Achaea a breathing-time win,
For an hour were enough their wearied strength to renew.'

So speaking the Goddess, fleet-footed Iris, was gone,
But he, Zeus' darling, arose, and Athena at once
On his puissant shoulders her tassell'd aegis o'erspread
And his temples crown'd with a wondrous halo of gold,
And from it she kindled a light as of radiant fire;
As when from a citadel smoke arises to heaven
In an island afar that foemen with leaguer beset
While the citizens all day long in dolorous war
Fight from their rampart, but soon with setting of sun
Beacons blaze in a line, and the glare of them goes
Shooting to heaven for neighbouring peoples to see
That so they may come with their ships to save it from doom,
So blaz'd from the head of Achilles a light to the heaven.
And straightway took he his stand in front of the wall
But clear of the fighters, remembering his mother's command:
There stood he and shouted, and Pallas Athena afar,
Joining her cry, unspeakable terror awoke;
Clear as the voice of a trumpet that sounds to the charge
When slaughterous foemen beleaguer an enemy's town,

So clear did the voice ring forth of Aeacides.
And, hearing the brazen cry of Aeacides,
The Trojans were all dismay'd, and their horses were fain
The chariots to turn for they boded woe in their hearts,
And the charioteers were amaz'd when Achilles they saw
And over his temples the dread unwearying fire
Blazing, for grey-eyed Athena made it to blaze.
Thrice did godlike Achilles shout from the trench,
And thrice were the Trojans confounded and all their allies,
And there and then twelve perish'd, twelve of their best,
O'er their own chariots and spears; but the Danaan men
Joyfully haled Patroclus away from the darts
And laid on a litter, and, mourning, his comrades belov'd
Stood round him, and swift-foot Achilles accompanied them
Bitterly weeping his trusty comrade to see
On his bier lying, gash'd with the pitiless bronze—
The friend whom late he had sent with chariot and horses
To battle, but never again might welcome him home.

Then great-eyed Hera call'd on the weariless sun
To be gone, tho' loath, 'neath the streams of Oceanus,
And the sun went down and the noble Achaeans had rest
From murderous strife and the hazardous mellay of war.
But the Trojans also, leaving the violent fray,
Loos'd their fleet-footed horses from under the yoke
And held an assembly ere ever their meal they would take;
Standing they met, in their ranks—not one of them dar'd
Be seated, for fear was on all, beholding Achilles,
After long ceasing from dolorous battle, appear.
And among them did wise Polydamas lift up his voice,
Panthöus' son, who before and after could see,
Hector's compeer (the self-same night they were born):
Their best in counsel was he, as Hector in fight,
And now with kindly intent he harangued them and spake:
'Bethink you deeply, my friends; my counsel it is
That to Troy we return nor wait for the heavenly dawn
In the plain by the ships, for here we are far from our walls.
So long as Achilles with godlike Atrides was wroth,
So long was the Danaan army an easier prey:
I rejoic'd, I also, to couch on the field by their camp
Hoping to capture their ships and make them a spoil.
But of swift-foot Achilles now am I sorely afraid,
Whose spirit so vehement is that he never will choose
To stay on the plain where Trojans and Danaans share
The fury of Ares equally, slaying each other:

'Tis for Troy he will fight as his prize, and the women of Troy.
Then go we up to our fastness, for thus will it be:
Ambrosial night has stay'd him from onset, as now,
But to-morrow, if girded in armour he light on us here
Couch'd on the plain, full soon shall ye know it is he
And, whoso shall flee, he will count himself happy to win
To our walls, but many shall dogs and vultures devour
Of the sons of Ilion—far be that from mine ear!
But if to my words of counsel we hearken tho' loath,
This night, in our ranks assembled, our strength we shall keep,
And the towers and the lofty gates and the well-polish'd doors
That fit close-locking thereon the city shall guard,
And at dawn of day, in our armour accoutred as now,
Our walls we will man, and ill shall he fare if he choose
Far from the ships to battle with us for our walls:
Back to his ships will he go, when under our walls
His strong-neck'd horses are wearied with scouring the plain,
For never will courage avail him an entry to force
Or the city to sack; but dogs shall devour him ere then.'

And, louring upon him, bright-plum'd Hector replied:
'Polydamas, now no longer like I thy speech
When thou bidd'st us retreat into Troy, to be pent within walls;
Are ye not sated e'en yet with skulking at home?
For of Priam's city of old all mortals could tell
The treasures of gold that it held and the treasures of bronze,
Yet to-day are its goodly possessions from out of its homes
Perish'd and much wealth also in Phrygia sold
Or Maéonia, since Zeus has been angry with us.
But now, when the son of Cronos has giv'n me to win
Renown at the ships and to pen the Achaeans in camp,
Fond heart! thou utterest in vain such follies to us:
No Trojan will heed thee, for that would I never allow.
But come now, hear ye my counsel, and hearing obey:
Take ye your meal in your ranks, array'd as ye are,
And keep good watch, and let each be awake in his place,
And if any among you so keenly grieve for his goods
Let him gather them all and give to the folk to devour:
'Twere better that friends had joy of them rather than foes.
But at dawn of day, in our armour accoutred as now,
We will wake by the hollow ships the fury of war,
And, if godlike Achilles indeed by the ships be arisen,
Ill shall he fare, if he wills it, for never will I
Flee from tumultuous war but steadfast abide
And see if Achilles or Hector the glory shall win:

Fair-dealing is Ares, and often the slayer he slays.'
So Hector spake and the Trojans roar'd their applause.
Fond fools! for Pallas Athena bereft them of wits
To shout approval to Hector's evil advice
And not to the excellent counsel of Polydamas.

So took they their meal in their ranks, but the Myrmidon men
All night long for Patroclus lamented and moan'd,
And among them Pelëides began the lament
Laying his man-slaying hands on the breast of his friend
And moaning sore, as a bearded lion will moan
When some hunter of deer has snatch'd his young ones away
From their forest lair, and the lion, missing them, grieves
And follows the track of the hunter through many a glade
In hope to find him, for anger is bitter in him;
So, heavily moaning, he to the Myrmidons spake:
'Out on it! vain was the word that I spake on a day
When I sought to comfort the hero, Menoetius old,
Saying that home I should bring his glorious son
When Troy we had sack'd, with his rightful share of the spoil.
But Zeus fulfils not wholly the purpose of men:
'Tis fated that both of us redden the earth with our blood
Here in Troyland, since I too ne'er shall return
For my old father to welcome me back in his halls
And Thetis my mother, for earth shall hold me in Troy.
But now, since I follow thee, comrade, under the ground,
I will not entomb thee till Hector's armour and head,
Thy great-hearted slayer's, I hither have brought to the ships;
And in front of thy pyre the throats of twelve will I slit
Of the noblest scions of Troy, in my anger for thee.
Till then by the beak'd ships thou shalt lie as thou art,
And round thee shall deep-bosom'd women, daughters of Troy,
Unceasingly raise their daily and nightly lament,
The captives we labour'd to win by our prowess and spears
Whenever some rich and populous city we sack'd.'

So speaking godlike Achilles call'd to his braves
To fetch him a laving-cauldron and set o'er the fire
To wash from Patroclus's body the stains and the blood;
And the cauldron they straightway brought him and set o'er
the fire

And pour'd in it water and kindled faggots beneath,
And the flames lick'd round, and the water was heated therein.
But when in the gleaming bronze the water had boil'd
Then wash'd they the corpse and anointed it thickly with oil
And, with sweet fresh unguent fillings the gaps of his wounds,

On a bier they laid him and wrapp'd him in fine-woven lawn
From his head to his feet, and a white robe over him spread;
And the Myrmidons all night long round swift-foot Achilles
Made moan for their comrade Patroclus, lamenting the dead.

But Thetis the silvery-footed came to the house
Of Hephaestus, starlike, bronze imperishable,
Far seen among all the Immortals, built by himself,
And found him swelt'ring at toil as he bustled about
At his bellows, smithying tripods, twenty in all,
To stand round the walls of his strong-built palace of bronze.
On each at the base three golden wheels he had set
So that, self-impell'd, they could enter the feast of the Gods
And again return to their places, a marvel to see.
The work he had all but finish'd but still on the ears
Was busy, cunningly wrought, and was riveting them.
And ev'n as he labour'd at them with knowing intent
The Goddess Thetis, the silvery-footed, approach'd,
And Charis in radiant head-band came to the door
Whom the glorious limping Fire-god had taken to wife,
And, clasping her hand, address'd her and call'd her by name:
'Hail! long-robed Thetis, why dost thou visit our house,
Honour'd and dear? No frequent comer art thou;
But follow me in and with cheer I will make thee at home.'
So speaking the lady Charis led her within
And set her a chair with studs of silver emboss'd,
Wondrously made, and a footstool under her feet,
And call'd to the glorious smith and a word to him spake:
'Come, Hephaestus! Thetis has need of thy help.'
And straightway the limping Fire-god to Charis replied:
'A dread and an honour'd guest is she in my sight
Who deliver'd me once from the pains that came of my fall
When my shameless mother would fain have hid me away
Finding me lame: for in anguish sore had I been
If she and her sister-nymph had not nurs'd me and heal'd,
Eurynome, daughter of ambient Oceanus.
Nine years I forged for the Goddesses curious things,
Brooches and armlets and goblets and necklaces bright,
In their hollow cave, and around it the infinite stream
Of Ocean murmuring flow'd; but none of the rest
Of the Heavenly ones or of mortals knew where I was
Save Thetis and Eurynome, who had heal'd me from pain:
'Tis she that is come to our house, and much it behoves
To repay fair Thetis the debt for saving my life.
But do thou make cheer for our guest with all that is meet

While I put my bellows away and the tools of my craft.'

So spake he and rose from his anvil, a giant in bulk,
Limping of gait tho' his legs mov'd nimbly beneath,
And the bellows he drew from the fire, and collected and stow'd
In a coffer of silver all the tools of his craft.

Then wip'd he his face and both his hands with a sponge
And his sinewy neck and his shoulders and shag-hair'd breast,
And, donning his doublet, forth he went on his staff
Limping, but handmaidens mov'd their master to help
In semblance as daughters of men tho' shapen of gold;
Minds they have, as the living, and speech in their tongues
And strength in their limbs and skill of their hands from the
Gods.

So mov'd they beneath their master, and halting he went
And sat on a shining chair by the Goddess's side
And, clasping her hand, address'd her and call'd her by name:
'Hail! long-robed Thetis, why dost thou visit our house,
Honour'd and dear? No frequent comer thou art:
Speak now thy mind, I am fain to accomplish thy will,
If accomplish I can and the thing is appointed to be.'
And, shedding a tear, the lady Thetis replied:

'Hephaestus, which goddess of all in Olympus that dwell
So many piteous griefs has endur'd in her heart
As the woes that Cronion Zeus has laid upon me?
Alone of my sisters he gave me in thrall to a man,
To Peleus, Aeacus' son, and wedlock I brook'd
Right loath with a mortal, who now with burdensome age
Lies helpless at home: but other griefs are for me,
For a son did He also give me to bear and to rear,
Peerless, a prince among men: like a sapling he grew,
Like a shoot in a fruitful garden, rear'd by my care,
And I sent him with high-beak'd ships to Ilion's strand
To fight with the Trojans, but never in Phthia again,
In the house of Peleus his father, shall welcome him home.
And while yet he lives and beholds the light of the sun
Grief is his portion, and I can succour him not;
For the maid that the sons of Achaea chose for his prize
Her has King Agamemnon snatch'd from his hands.
Long did he grieve for the damsel, wasting his heart,
And when in the ring of their ships the Achaeans were penn'd,
Cut off from the plain, the elders besought him for help
And many a glorious gift they proffer'd to him.
Then, tho' himself he refused to defend them from death,
In his own armour he girded Patroclus his friend

And sent him to battle, with many a man in his train:
All day long at the Scaean gates did they fight
And that same day would have sack'd the city of Troy,
But Apollo slew him while death he wreak'd on his foes
In the front of the fight, and to Hector gave the renown.
Therefore now at thy knees I supplicate thee
And ask for my swift-doom'd son a helmet and shield
And greaves for his shins, with anklets fitted thereto,
And a corslet: the arms that he had to the Trojans were lost
When Patroclus was slain, and Achilles grovels in woe.'
And her did the glorious Fire-god in answer address:
'Courage! nor let thou his armour trouble thy heart:
Would that I might so surely from infamous death
Hide him away, when dread Fate comes upon him,
As surely as goodly arms shall be ready at need
Which whoso hereafter may see in wonder shall gaze.'

So spake he and, leaving her there, to his bellows he went
And pointed them into the fire and set them to work,
And the bellows, twenty in all, on the crucibles blew
Shooting forth on them blasts of various strength,
Some to quicken his labour while others again,
As the Fire-god's task was accomplish'd, weaklier blew;
And he cast in the crucibles bronze unyielding and tin
And gold most precious and silver, and then to its stand
He lifted the anvil and grasp'd his hammer of steel
In his strong right hand and wielded the tongs with his left.

First a shield did he fashion, mighty and strong,
Wondrously figur'd, and round it a threefold rim
That glinted with light, and a silver baldric thereto.
Five were the plates of the shield and on them he wrought
Curious figures full many with cunning and skill:
There he pictur'd the Earth and the Heav'n and the Sea,
The unwearying might of the Sun and the Moon at her full,
The constellations wherewith the heavens are crown'd,
Pleiads and Hyads, the sign of Orion the strong,
The Bear (that earth-dwelling men call also the Wain)
That wheels in her place, on Orion keeping her watch,
And alone in the baths of Ocean dips not her fires.

Next he fashion'd thereon two cities of men
And in one of the two a marriage festival wrought;
With blaze of torches they led the brides from their bowers
Through the streets of the city, and round them the nuptial
song

Rose clear, and nimble bachelors whirl'd in the dance

With the flute and the viol sounding, and maidens and wives
Stood in the doorways and marvell'd the pageant to see.
There too was a court of justice, where strife had arisen
Touching a fine for the blood of a man that was slain,
For the slayer claim'd to have offer'd atonement in full,
Expounding his case, but naught would the other accept;
And both of them sought from a daysman the issue thereof,
But the folk took sides with the suitors, cheering them on,
While heralds kept them in order; and aldermen sat
On polish'd stones in a circle to judge in the case,
And the clear-voic'd heralds were giving them staves for their
hands

As they rose in their places and each gave judgment in turn.
Midmost the court there were set two talents of gold,
A prize for the judge that his doom most justly should give.

But the other town two armies in glittering bronze
Were besieging, and this way and that their counsels were
sway'd,

Either to sack it or share with the folk of the town
The wealth that the fair-wrought citadel held in its walls,
But the leaguer'd townsmen refus'd and for ambushment arm'd,
And wives and innocent children stood on the walls
With ancient fathers, to guard the city from sack,
While the rest went forth under Ares and Pallas Athena,
Both fashion'd in gold, as their raiment was also of gold,
Noble and tall in their armour even as Gods,
Conspicuous shown while the folk seem'd small at their feet.
But when to the chosen place of the ambush they came
In a river's bed, at a watering-place of the herds,
There sate they them down, all coated in glittering bronze,
While further along two scouts were posted apart
To spy the coming of flocks and of crook-horn'd kine
That presently came into view, and accompanying them
Two herdsmen were playing on pipes, naught dreaming of guile;
And the ambush, seeing them, sallied and sprang on their prey
And speedily cut off the herd and the timorous flocks
Of white-fleeced sheep, and the herdsmen also they slew.
But the armies of siege, where still in their council they sat,
Hearing the din from the cattle mounted at once
Behind their high-stepping horses and came to the spot;
And, arraying their battles, they fought on the banks of the
stream

Spearing and slaying each other with javelins of bronze,
And Strife and Tumult were with them, and ruinous Death

Was grasping a man fresh-wounded, another yet whole,
While another, dead, through the mellay she dragg'd by the
feet,

And her raiment about her shoulders was redden'd with blood;
And the armies like living people mingled and fought
Or were haling each others' dead to despoil them of arms.

And next he fashion'd a cornfield, fallow and rich,
In its third ploughing, and many a plougher therein
Driving his ox-team wheel'd them this way and that;
And whenever a plougher came to the headland and turn'd
A squire stepp'd forward and placed a cup in his hands
Of sweet-hearted wine, while others the furrow retraced
Eager to cover the ground and the boundary reach;
And the tilth, as ploughland is wont, grew black in their rear
Albeit of gold, for that was the wonder of it.

And he wrought the demesne of a King and reapers therein
Cutting the corn as their sharp-edg'd sickles they plied;
And the swaths, where they reap'd, were falling in rows on
the ground,

While elsewhere the binders with straw were tying the sheaves.
Three binders there were for the work and behind them were
boys

Bringing the corn by armfuls their hands to supply,
Sheaf upon sheaf, and the King with a staff in his hand
Silent stood by the swath, rejoicing at heart,
And henchmen under an oak were preparing a feast,
A mighty ox fresh-slaughter'd, and women apart
White barley were shredding to make a meal for the hinds.

A vineyard he fashion'd, teeming with bunches of grapes,
Loveliest gold-work: dark were the clustering grapes
But every vine on a pole of silver was propp'd,
And round was a cyanus ditch, and outermost ran
A wattle of tin, and a single path to it led
Whereby the vintagers enter'd to harvest the grapes;
And maidens and striplings, their young hearts happy and gay,
Carried in osier baskets the sweet-hearted fruit,
And a boy in their midst with the viol's silvery note
Made beautiful music and chanted with delicate voice
The Linus-song, while the others, beating their feet,
Kept time, as they fil'd down the path, with the music and song.

Then wrought he a herd of cattle with towering horns:
In precious gold and in tin he fashion'd them fair
As from byre to pasture they shambl'd, lowing the while,
By the banks of a murmuring river where bulrushes grew.

There went four herdsmen in gold by the side of the kine
And nine swift watch-dogs to guard them follow'd behind,
But lo! two terrible lions had seiz'd on a bull
'Mong the foremost kine, and they dragg'd him, bellowing loud,
Away from the herd, pursued by the herdsmen and hounds;
And the ravenous lions were rending the hide of the bull
And devouring his entrails and lapping his blood with their
tongues,

While the herdsmen helplessly cried to their fleet-footed dogs
Tarring them on, but they shrank from biting the beasts
And bark'd at their heels, still keeping their distance from them.

A mountain-pasture he wrought on the orb of the shield,
A pasture of white-fleec'd sheep in a beautiful dale
With a steading and straw-roof'd huts and folds for the flock.

A dance-ground fashion'd he also, the glorious smith,
Like that which of old in spacious Cnosus was built
For fair Ariadne by Daedalus' wonderful art:
There youths and maidens of costly wooing were shown
Dancing and holding each other's hands at the wrist,
The maidens in raiment of finest linen attir'd,
The youths in tunics, that faintly glisten'd with oil;
Wreath'd were the girls in chaplets, and daggers of gold
Hanging from baldrics of silver shone on the youths.
And now would they circle with cunning feet in the dance
As lightly as when some potter, spinning the wheel
That fits to his hands, makes trial whether it run,
And anon would they meet in the middle in opposite lines;
And round them a mighty company stood in a ring
Enjoying the lovely dances, and, moving between,
Two tumblers, leading the measure, whirl'd in the midst.

And last the river of Ocean in sinuous strength
He set on the well-wrought shield round the uttermost rim.

But soon as the shield he had fashion'd, mighty and strong,
He wrought for the hero a corslet brighter than fire,
And a massive helmet he wrought him, fitting his brows,
Lovely grav'n, and a crest of gold on it set,
And greaves he wrought for him also of pliable tin.
And when all the armour was finish'd, the glorious smith
Gather'd it up and laid it at Thetis's feet,
And at once like a falcon from snowy Olympus she sprang,
Carrying the glittering arms to Achilles her son.

Achilles renounces his wrath against Agamemnon and is reconciled to him before the assembly and puts on his new armour.

AND gold-mantled Dawn from the streams of Oceanus
 Rose, bringing the light of day to Immortals and men,
 And Thetis came to the ships with the gift from the God
 And found, o'er Patroclus fallen, Achilles her son
 Loudly lamenting, while many a comrade around
 Made moan; and the Goddess approach'd and stood at his side
 And, clasping his hand, address'd him and call'd him by name:
 'My son, tho' sore be our grief, let us leave him to lie
 Since the will of the Gods from the first design'd him for death;
 But look! Hephaestus has sent thee the glorious arms
 More goodly than mortal before on his shoulders has borne.'
 So speaking she laid in their splendour the heavenly arms
 At the feet of her son, and they rang at the touch of her hand;
 And straightway trembling and awe on the Myrmidons fell
 For they dared not gaze on their sheen but quail'd at the sight.
 But Achilles, beholding, was stirr'd with anger the more
 And his eyes blaz'd terribly forth as 'twere fire 'neath the lids,
 Yet joyously turn'd he the dazzling gift in his hands
 And, when he had feasted his soul with the glory of it,
 Straightway his mother in winged words he address'd:
 'Mother, the arms of the Fire-god are such as is meet
 That Immortals should forge, no mortal handiwork these!
 And now will I arm me in them. Yet sorely I fear
 Lest meanwhile flies should alight on Menoetius' son
 And breed in the bronze-gash'd wounds, where stricken he was,
 Maggots and foul corruption his flesh to defile
 And, the life being out of him, all his body will rot.'
 And Thetis the silvery-footed answer'd her son:
 'Cease grieving, my child, let these things trouble thee not:
 I will watch o'er Patroclus myself and ward from his skin
 The armies of flies that batten on flesh of the slain;
 E'en though he should lie till a full year circle its course,
 Free from decay shall he be, yea, fresher than now.
 But do thou the Achaean chieftains summon at once
 Thy wrath to unsay 'gainst Atrides, shepherd of men,

Then gird thee quickly for battle and clothe thee with power,'
So speaking she breath'd in Achilles courage and strength,
And ambrosia shed on Patroclus, and roseate nectar
Distill'd in his nostrils, to keep his flesh from decay.

But godlike Achilles went by the sands of the sea
Shouting his terrible cry the Achaeans to rouse,
And all that were wont in the ships' assemblage to bide
And all that were helmsmen and handled the steerage of ships
And all that were stewards and food dispens'd at the ships
Now came to the place of assembly, since godlike Achilles,
After long resting from dolorous war, had appear'd.
And two of the War-god's company limping arriv'd,
Tydides, stalwart in battle, and godlike Odysseus,
Leaning on lances for painful still were their wounds,
And sat in the foremost places with others their peers;
And last came King Agamemnon, ruler of men,
With his wound upon him, as when in the stress of the fight
Cöon his arm transfix'd with the spearhead of bronze.
And when all the Achaeans in full assembly were met,
Then swift-foot Achilles arose among them and spake:
'Thinkst thou, Atrides, 'twas well for thee and for me
That, how heavy soever our grief, for the sake of a girl
We two in soul-wasting strife embitter'd should be?
Would that by Artemis' stroke she had died at the ships
The day that I won her and sack'd Lyrnessus her home!
So should fewer Achaeans have bitten the dust
'Neath their enemies' hands, through all the time of my wrath:
'Twas well for Hector and Troy! but the Argives, methinks,
Shall long remember the strife that has parted us twain.
But bygones leave we to be, in spite of our grief,
Bending our hearts in our breasts to Necessity's yoke;
Lo now! I cease from my wrath, for it little beseems
My anger for ever to nurse. But, Atrides, do thou
Speedily summon the long-hair'd Achaeans to fight
That the Trojans again I may face and put them to proof
If they choose to sleep by the ships, for gladly, methinks,
Will many a one rest on his knee when out of the fray
From before my conquering spear he has scaped with his life.'
So spake he, and all the mail-clad Achaeans rejoic'd
That the great-hearted son of Peleus his wrath had renounc'd.

And the King of men, Agamemnon, spake in their midst:
'Friends, Danaan chiefs that of Ares' company are,
'Tis meet, when the speaker rises, to listen to him
And not interrupt him; his task will be hard at the best

Ev'n for a Nestor, but how can one listen or speak
In an uproar of voices, where even the clearest is drown'd?
'Tis Achilles in chief I address, but ye others as well
Give heed, and each of you mark the words that I speak;
For often ye others the same reproaches have us'd
Upbraiding me for the strife: but the cause is not I
But Zeus and Fate and the Fury that walks in the dark,
Who smote me with madness and blinded my heart on the day
When in the assembly I took from Achilles his prize.
What then could I do? 'Tis Zeus that accomplishes all:
For Ate, his eldest daughter, infatuates men,
Fell Goddess! for soft is her tread, and not on the ground
Does she walk but over the heads of earth-dwelling men
Making them stumble, as now ye have seen in myself.
She blinded even Cronion, the greatest by far
Of men or of Gods, when Hera with feminine wiles
Deceiv'd him in heaven and blindness came upon him
On the day when in tower-girt Thebes Alcmena her son,
Great Hercules scion of Zeus, should have brought to his birth,
And the Father, vaunting, the Gods in their conclave address'd:
"Give ear to my words, ye Gods and Goddesses all,
While I utter the thought and the purpose that stirs in my
breast:

This day shall the Goddess whose gifts are the travail-throes
A man-child bring to his birth o'er his neighbours to rule,
Of the race of the mortal-born that are sprung from my loins."
And, with guile in her heart, Queen Hera spake to her lord:
"Thou playest the cheat and wilt nowise the saying fulfil!
Come now, Olympian, bind me thy word with an oath
And swear of a truth that o'er all his neighbours shall rule
The child that between the feet of a woman shall fall
This day, of the mortal-born that are sprung from thy loins."
So spake she, and Zeus perceiv'd not the guile in her heart
But sware her the oath and was stricken with blindness therein,
For Hera sprang from Olympus and, darting her way
To Achæan Argos, came where she knew that there dwelt
A princess, the wife of Sthenelus, Perseus' son,
Who also was great with child, two months from her time,
And brought her son to the light unripe from the womb,
But Alcmena's time she prolong'd and her travail delay'd.
And she came with the tidings herself and Cronion address'd:
"Zeus, Lord of the Lightning, a word will I speak in thy ear:
This day a mortal is born that in Argos shall rule,
Eurystheus the son of Sthenelus, Perseus' son,

But of thy seed, and 'tis meet that in Argos he rule."
So spake she, and sharp pain smote to the depths of his soul
And Ate he seiz'd by the glistening locks of her hair
In the wrath of his heart, and an oath irrevocable
He swore that never again to the star-spangled heav'n
Should Ate return, for the blindness she sends upon all.
So spake he and whirl'd her and flung from the star-spangled
heav'n

And quickly she came in her fall 'mong the dwellings of men;
But often he groan'd at the thought of her, seeing his son
Labouring hard Eurystheus' tasks to perform,
As I groan'd also when bright-plum'd Hector I saw
Slaying the Achaeans in fight by the sterns of the ships
And could never Ate forget who had blinded me first:
But since blinded I was and the Father bereft me of wits,
The wrong I am fain to requite with measureless gifts.
But rouse thee to battle with all the rest of the host,
And the gifts forthcoming shall be that godlike Odysseus
Yesterday went to thy hut to promise to thee;
Wait then awhile, if thou wilt, tho' eager for fight,
And my henchmen shall straightway fetch thee the gifts from
my ship

That so thou mayst see that I make thee atonement in full.'
And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Most noble Atrides, King and Ruler of men,
The gifts if thou choose to offer, 'tis meet that thou shouldst
Or withhold if thou wilt: but now with battle and strife
Our business must be, nor beseems it to dally with words
Wasting the time when a great work still is to do.
Once more must Achilles be seen in the front of the fight
Laying with his brazen spear the battalions low:
Let each one bethink him thereof, as he fights with his men.'

But him did wary Odysseus in answer address:
'Think yet again, O Achilles, brave as thou art,
And lead not the sons of Achaea fasting to fight
'Gainst Ilion's hosts, for no brief skirmish 'twill be
When once the battalions of men shall meet on the plain
In the fury of battle and God breathes valour in both.
But bid the Achaeans taste at the swift-going ships
Of meat and of drink, for thence comes courage and strength;
For no man, fasting and foodless, is able to fight
All day long with the foe till setting of sun.
Tho' eager his spirit may be to continue the fight,
Yet weariness steals o'er his limbs ere he know it himself

And thirst and hunger beset him and weaken his knees;
But whoso, having his fill both of meat and of drink,
Fights all day with the foe till setting of sun,
His heart within him is bold and his limbs not a whit
Wax weary, till all on the field give back from the fight.
Come, dismiss we the meeting and bid them prepare
Their meal, and the gifts let Atrides, Ruler of men,
Bring forward amidst the assembly, that all the Achaeans
May see with their eyes and thóu mayst be gladden'd at heart.
And Atrides shall stand in our midst and swear thee an oath
That never he lay with the damsel nor enter'd her bed,
And thy own spirit within thee shall so be appeas'd;
And then let him make thee a sumptuous feast in his hut
And fully atone thee, that nothing may lack of thy right.
And thou, Agamemnon, juster hereafter shalt be
To others thy lieges: 'tis meet that even a king
Amendment should make when himself the quarrel began.'
And him did King Agamemnon in answer address:
'I rejoice, O son of Læertes, thy counsel to hear:
Thou reasonest well and in all things speakest aright.
The oath I am willing to swear (so bids me my heart)
And truly, with God as my witness. Achilles shall bide
With us for a space, tho' eager for battle he be,
And all ye others abide till the gifts from my hut
Come forth and with sacrifice meet we establish our oath.
And thyself, O Odysseus, thus do I charge thee and bid:
Choose from the youth of Achaea the chiefest and best
To fetch the gifts from my ship that ye yesterday pledg'd
To give to Achilles, and bring the women with thee.
And thou, Talthybius, make me ready a boar
In the midst of the host to offer to Zeus and the Sun.'

And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Most noble Atrides, King and Ruler of men,
Some other occasion were better for cares such as these
When haply a pause there shall be in the stress of the fight
And the spirit within my breast less fiercely shall burn.
But now all mangled they lie, the friends that were slain
By man-slaying Hector when Zeus gave glory to him,
And ye, ye would call me to eat: far fainer would I
Order the sons of Achaea to fight as they are,
Unfed and fasting, and later with setting of sun
Make ready a mighty meal when the shame is aveng'd.
Till then neither meat nor drink, I speak for myself,
Shall pass through my lips, since my comrade Patroclus is dead

And mangled with pitiless bronze lies stretch'd in my hut
With his feet to the door, and his comrades around him lament,
And I think not at all in my heart of meat or of drink
But of slaying and blood and the grievous moaning of men.'
And him did wary Odysseus in answer address:
'Achilles, thou son of Peleus, the best of thy peers,
I grant thou art stronger and better than I with the spear,
But I in counsel may well surpass thee as much
Since thy elder I am and know by experience more:
Therefore endure in thy heart to listen to me.
Speedily comes upon men a surfeit of battle,
For in battle is stubble in plenty cut to the ground
But the harvest is scanty indeed, when his balance He dips
Who for mortals the issues of war disposes and rules.
'Tis not by fasting, methinks, that we mourn for the dead,
For exceeding many in battle, on every day,
Fall, and no respite there is from the toil of the fight;
Behoves us rather to bury the man that is dead,
Steeling our hearts when once we have wept for the day,
But all that are left from the hateful slaughter alive
Must remember to eat and to drink that so yet again
Their strength they may feed and relentlessly fight with the foe,
Cloth'd in resistant bronze. Nor let any await
Another summons hereafter, nor shrink from the fray:
This is the summons, and ill shall it be for the man
That stays by the ships; let us all together as one
Wake 'gainst the horse-taming Trojans the fury of war.'

He spake, and the sons of glorious Nestor he took
And Meges and Thoas and Cretan Meriones
And Criontes' son Lycomedes and brave Melanippus,
And they went on their way to the hut of Atrides the King;
And at once, as the word was spoken, so was it done.
Seven tripods, ev'n as he promis'd, they brought from the hut,
Twelve horses and gleaming cauldrons twenty by tale,
And the women, in handiwork skill'd, they led from the hut,
Seven, and the fair Brisëis herself was the eighth;
And Odysseus anon, having weigh'd ten talents of gold,
Return'd, and behind him the young men carried the gifts.
And, all being set in the midst, Agamemnon arose,
And beside the shepherd of men Talthylbius stood,
Clear-voic'd as a God, and the boar in readiness held.
And straightway Atrides, drawing his knife with his hand
From beside the sheath of his sword where always it hung,
The forelock cut from the boar and, raising his hands,

Pray'd to Cronion, and all the Achaeans the while
Silent sat in their places listening to him;
And, lifting his eyes to the heaven, he uttered his prayer:
'Be Zeus my witness, of Gods the highest and best,
And Earth and the Sun and the Furies that under the earth
Take vengeance on all that forswear themselves among men,
That on fair Brisëis never a hand I have laid
Either to lie with the damsel or anywise else
But untouch'd she has been in my keeping ev'n as she came.
And, if falsely I swear, may the Gods then visit on me
All ills that they send upon him that sins in his oath.'
He spake and the boar's throat cut with the pitiless bronze,
And into the wash of the sea Talthybius hurl'd
The carcass to feed the fishes. But godlike Achilles
Stood up and thus 'mong the war-loving Danaans spake:
'Great Zeus! thou sendest in truth sore madness on men:
Else surely Atrides had never stirr'd in my breast
The implacable wrath nor ever the damsel had ta'en
Perversely, in my despite: but the Father himself
So will'd it, that death on many Achaeans might come.
Now go ye at once to your meal and for battle prepare.'
He spake, and his word dismiss'd the assembly with speed
And straightway they scatter'd, every man to his ship,
But the great-hearted Myrmidons busied themselves with the
gifts

And to godlike Achilles' vessel bare them away
And stow'd in the hut, and seated the women within,
And the horses his gallent squires drove home to their troop.

But Brisëis, fair as the golden Goddess of love,
When she saw Patroclus gash'd with the pitiless bronze,
Wail'd falling about him, and ceas'd not to tear with her hands
Her breast and delicate neck and her beautiful face
And spake as she wept, divinely fair in her tears:
'Woe's me! Patroclus, so dear as thou wert to my heart!
I left thee alive when I went of late from the hut,
And now, dear chieftain, again I come to thy side
To find thee fallen: for evil is ever my lot.
My husband, the prince that my parents gave me to wed,
I saw in Lyrnessus slain by the pitiless bronze,
And my brothers, the three that my own mother had borne,
My nearest and dearest, their deathday found at his side.
Thou badest me weep not, when swift-foot Achilles had slain
My husband and Mynes' citadel sack'd with the sword,
And didst promise to make me the wedded wife of thy friend

Godlike Achilles, and bring me to Phthia on ship
And prepare me a marriage feast 'mong the Myrmidon folk.
Therefore I weep for thee, always gentle and kind.'
So spake she and wept, and the women wail'd in accord
Mourning the fate of Patroclus, yet each one her own;
And around Achilles the elders gather'd again
Bidding him eat, but the hero refus'd with a groan:
'I pray you, if any my comrades will hearken to me,
Bid me not gladden my heart with meat or with drink
As yet, for terrible sorrow upon me is come;
Till the sun go down I will bide, enduring the while.'

He spake, and the other chieftains departed at once,
But the two Atridae and godlike Odysseus remain'd,
Idomeneus, Nestor, and Phoenix the veteran knight,
Seeking to comfort his grief, but no comfort would he
Ere the open mouth he might enter of blood-spilling war;
And, bethinking himself, with a deep-drawn sigh he began:
'Often ere now, thou ill-starr'd comrade of mine,
Thyself in our hut hast prepar'd me a savoury meal
With readiest speed, what time the Achaeans would haste
To wage on the horse-taming Trojans dolorous war.
But now thou liest all mangled, and I in my heart
Will none of the meat and the drink that are stor'd in my hut,
Through longing for thee. Naught worse could I ever endure
E'en though I should hear that my own father is dead
Who now in Phthia, methinks, is shedding his tears
For lack of Achilles, while I in an alien land
For the sake of Helen abhorr'd with the Trojans must fight,
Or hear that my well-lov'd son in Scyros is dead,
If indeed Neoptolemus anywhere still be alive.
For till now I had hoped in my heart, fond hope it may be,
Far from horse-rearing Argos to perish alone
Here in Troy, and that thou shouldst to Phthia return
Having fetch'd from Scyros my son in a swift-going ship,
And shouldst be to the child as a father and show him my realm,
My servants and goods and the high-roof'd palace, his home.
For already, methinks, old Peleus is gone to his rest
Or lives, if he lives, but feebly and vex'd in his soul
With the sorrows of hateful age, expecting to hear
Grievous tidings of me, when from life I am pass'd.'
So spake he and wept, and the elders groan'd in accord
Remembering, each of them, all they had left in their halls.
But the son of Cronos, beholding, had pity on them
And summon'd Athena and winged words to her spake:

'My child, hast thou wholly forsaken the man of thy heart,
Pelides, or holds he no longer a place in thy thought?
Yonder he sits in front of the high-beak'd ships
Mourning his comrade belov'd while the rest of his peers
Are gone to their meal, but fasting and foodless is he.
Go now, and nectar and sweet ambrosia take
To distil in his breast, that hunger may come not on him.'
So saying he speeded Athena, tho' eager herself,
And she like a falcon in flight, wide-pinion'd and shrill,
Leapt down through the aether from heav'n to the Danaan
camp,

And, whilst the Achaeans were arming, Achilles she sought
And roseate nectar and sweet ambrosial drops
Distill'd in his breast lest hunger should weaken his knees,
Then back to the house of her Father straightway was gone.

And the hosts of Achaea pour'd from the swift-going ships:
As when from the heav'n thick snowflakes flutter and fall
'Neath the ice-cold blast of the North, ethereal-born,
So thick did the helmets and high-boss'd shields of the host,
Glittering bright, stream forth from the Danaan ships
With many a corslet of plate and good ashen spear,
And the sheen went up to the heav'n, and the earth underneath
Laugh'd in the flashing of bronze, and with tramping of feet
Re-echoed, while godlike Achilles arm'd in their midst.
Loudly he gnash'd with his teeth, and the light in his eyes
Blaz'd like a fire, and anguish not to be borne
Enter'd his soul, as, wroth with the Trojans, he donn'd
The heavenly arms that the Fire-god had wrought by his skill:
First on his shins Pelides fasten'd the greaves,
Beautiful handiwork, clasp'd with anklets of silver,
And then the corslet about his breast he did on,
And the brazen sword with studs of silver emboss'd
He slung from his shoulder, and next the ponderous shield
He grasp'd, and it gleam'd afar like the silvery moon.
As when to sailors at sea the brightness appears
Of a burning fire that high on a mountain is lit
In a lonely dwelling, when storms o'er the fish-teeming deep
Carry them, all unwilling, far from their friends,
So from the daedal shield of Achilles there went
A light to the heav'n: and the massive helmet he rais'd
And set on his brows and it shone on his head like a star,
The helmet with horsehair crest, and the plumelets of gold
Wav'd, that along the ridges the Fire-god had wrought.
And godlike Achilles the armour prov'd on himself

Whether it sat on him well and his limbs mov'd free;
And the arms were as wings to him, buoying him up as he went.
And he drew from the stand the spear that his father's had been,
Huge, heavy, and stalwart, that none of the other Achaeans
Could brandish or cast but only Achilles himself,
The Pelian ash that Chiron to Peleus had giv'n
From Pelion's summit, the death of heroes to be.

But meanwhile his squires with the horses busied themselves
And yok'd them: and when on their breasts they had fasten'd
the straps

And bitted their jaws and the reins laid straight on their backs
To reach to the chariot behind, Automedon grasp'd
The bright whip fitting his palm and sprang to the car,
And after him mounted Achilles, in panoply clad,
Resplendent in arms like the dazzling Sun-god on high;
And terribly then to his father's horses he cried:
'Dapple and Chestnut, Podarga's glorious sons,
In other sort bethink you your master to save
And bring him back to the host, when the fighting is done,
Nor leave him slain on the field as Patroclus ye left.'
And fleet-footed Chestnut straightway from under his yoke
(For Hera the white-arm'd Goddess endued him with speech)
Address'd him and bow'd with his head, and his mane as he
bow'd,

Escaping from under the yoke-tree, trail'd on the ground:
'Yea, mighty Achilles, we surely shall save while we may,
But thy death-day is near thee: not we thy slayers shall be,
But a God all-powerful shall slay thee, and tyrannous Fate.
For not through our witlessness or slowness of foot
Did the Trojans strip from Patroclus' shoulders his arms,
But the best of the Gods, of bright-haired Leda the son,
Slew him in battle and gave to Hector renown.
Swift as the wind are our feet, as Zephyr himself,
The swiftest, they say, of them all; but 'tis fated for thee
To be slain in the fight by the hands of a God and a man.'
So spake he, and there the Erinnyes his utterance stay'd,
And swift-foot Achilles was troubled and answer'd again:
'Why prophesy death for me, Chestnut? It little beseems:
Well know I myself, I am fated in Troyland to die
Far from my father and mother, yet ne'er shall I rest
Until I have giv'n to the Trojans their surfeit of war.'
So spake he and drove with a shout in the van of the host.

*Achilles fights with Aeneas and deals death among the
ranks of Troy.*

So by their high-beak'd vessels they arm'd for the fight
Round thee, great scion of Peleus, hungry for war,
And the Trojans, opposite, arm'd on the rise of the plain.
But Zeus from Olympus' crest sent Themis to call
The Immortal Gods to a council, and, visiting each,
She bade them assemble at once in the palace of Zeus;
No river there was that came not save Oceanus,
And every Nymph that haunts the woodlands and groves
Or fountains and streams or the grassy meadows was there,
And they came to the palace of Zeus that gathers the clouds
And, Goddess and God, in the polish'd corridors sate
That Hephaestus with cunning and skill for the Father had
made.

And when all were assembled within, the Earth-shaker last,
Obeying the summons, came from the deeps of the sea
And sate in their midst and inquir'd of the purpose of Zeus:
'Why, Lord of the Lightning, call'st thou a council of Gods?
Broodest thou somewhat concerning Achaea and Troy?
For lo! their strife is a fire that grows to its height.'
And him did the Cloud-compeller in answer address:
'Thou askest, Poseidon, yet all my counsel thou know'st
And why I have call'd you: they die, but I care for them still.
But hear ye now! I myself on Olympus will bide
And, sitting at ease, with watching will gladden my heart,
But all ye others to Trojans or Danaans go
As seems to you best, and succour whichever ye will.
For if swift-foot Achilles alone 'gainst the Trojans shall fight,
Not for an hour will they hold great Pelëides;
Nay, ever aforetime they trembled to look upon him,
But now, when his wrath for his friend so terribly burns,
I fear that, o'erleaping his fate, their wall he may storm.'
So spake Cronion and war unceasing awoke,
And the Gods went forth as to battle, divided in mood—
To the ships' assemblage Hera and Pallas Athena,
Poseidon the Earth-wielder, Hermes the Helper of man
That of all the Immortals in craft pre-eminent is,

And Hephaestus beside them went in the pride of his strength
Halting in gait tho' his knees mov'd nimbly beneath:
To the Trojans, bright-helm'd Ares with Phoebus beside him
Of the unshorn tresses, and Artemis girt with her bow,
And Leda and Xanthus and light-of-love Aphrodite.

So long as the Gods from mortals held them aloof,
So long the Achaeans gloried that Pelëides,
After long resting from dolorous war, had appear'd;
And the Trojans were stricken with trembling in every limb
And fear in their hearts, when swift-foot Achilles they saw
In his glittering armour, of man-slaying Ares the peer.
But when the Olympians enter'd the mellay of war,
Uprose in her might fell Discord, wakener of hosts;
And Athena, standing at whiles by the trench of the wall,
Utter'd her shout, and at whiles on the echoing shores,
And Ares shouted against her loud as a storm
Cheering the Trojans on from the citadel's height
Or the ridge of Callicolone, running at speed.
And so the blessed Immortals fury awak'd
In the hosts and ruinous strife let loose in their midst,
And terribly thunder'd the Father of Gods and of men
From heaven above, and Poseidon shook from beneath
The limitless earth and the mountain precipices,
And fountain'd Ida in every summit and spur
Quak'd, and the city of Troy and the Danaan ships;
And Hades, Lord of the shades, had terror in Hell
And leapt from his throne and shouted in terror aloud
Lest Poseidon the world o'er his head should shatter and split
And his realm to the eyes of Immortals and mortals reveal,
Horrible, dreary, that even by Gods is abhorr'd.
So loud was the roar that arose from the strife of the Gods:
For against the Earth-shaker, Lord Poseidon, was set
Phoebus Apollo with winged shafts in his hand,
And facing the War-god grey-eyed Pallas Athena;
'Gainst Hera the sister stood of the far-shooting God,
The Huntress Artemis, Queen of the echoing chase;
With Leda Hermes was match'd, strong Helper of man,
With Hephaestus the great deep-eddying River of Troy,
Xanthus call'd by the Gods, Scamander by men.

So Gods with each other were match'd: But Achilles the
while
Yearn'd above all great Hector to meet in the fray,
For chiefly with Hector's blood did his spirit desire
To glut the hunger of Ares, insatiate God;

But Apollo, the wakener of hosts, Aeneas arous'd
To challenge Achilles and fill'd him with courage and strength,
For the feature and voice of princely Lycæon he took,
The son of Priam, and straightway address'd him and said:
'Aeneas, to Trojans a counsellor, where are the threats
Wherewith 'mong the Trojan lords thou didst boast in thy cups
That with Pelëides thou wouldst match thy strength in the
field?'

And him did the brave Aeneas in answer address:
'Son of Priam, why bidd'st thou me, loath as I am,
With high-hearted Pelëides to match me in fight?
No first adventure were that, to meet him afield,
For once already on Ida he met me and chas'd
With his conquering spear, the day that he raided our kine
And Lyrnessus and Pedasus sack'd, but Zeus of his grace
Deliver'd me then and swiftness gave to my knees:
Else had I fall'n by the hand of Athena and him,
For she went before him and victory gave him and bade
With his bronze-headed spear the Trojans and Leleges slay.
No mortal, methinks, can match with Achilles in fight,
For ever some God is beside him to ward him from death.
Nay, ev'n unaided, his spear flies straight to its mark
Nor loses its force till it pierce through the flesh of a man:
But if God held even the scales, not lightly should he
O'ercome me in fight, tho' his body be wholly of bronze.'
And Apollo, the own son of Zeus, address'd him again:
'Nay, hero, but pray to the Gods, thou also as he;
For of Aphrodite they say that thou art the son,
A daughter of Zeus, while he of a Nereid was born,
No daughter of Zeus but the Ancient's that shepherds the sea.
Bear then against him thy spear, unwearying bronze,
Nor let him with words of reviling thy spirit appal.'

So saying he breath'd new strength in the shepherd of men
Who strode through the foremost fighters in glittering bronze,
And white-arm'd Hera fail'd not the Trojan to mark
As against Pelides he went through the mellay of men,
And she gather'd the Gods to her side and a word to them spake:
'Poseidon and Pallas Athena, bethink ye yourselves
What deeds are afoot and what the issue shall be:
Here goes Aeneas harness'd in glittering bronze
Pelides to meet, and 'tis Phoebus that spurr'd him to fight.
Come then, turn we Aeneas from challenging him
And make not delay: or else let some one of us
Likewise stand by Achilles and fill him with strength

That he fail not in spirit but know that they are the best
 Of all the Immortals that love him, and vain as the wind
 Are the others that ward from the Trojans fighting and war.
 All we are come from Olympus to share in the fray
 That this day at least from the Trojans he suffer no ill,
 For afterwards all may befall him as Fate at the first
 Span the thread of his life on the day he was born.
 If Achilles learn not of this from a warning divine,
 Afraid will he be when he faces a God in the press,
 For awful, in visible presence, are Gods to a man.'
 And to her made answer Poseidon, Shaker of Earth:
 'Be wise in thy anger, O Hera, for so it beseems:
 Myself, I were loath to embroil the Immortals in strife.
 But now to a place of vantage retire we and sit
 To watch the event, and the fighting leave we to men,
 But if Ares or Phoebus Apollo the battle invade
 Or lay constraint on Achilles and balk him in fight,
 Then straightway shall strife be the order even for us
 And the war-cry shall wake. Right soon will the issue be seal'd
 And those others, defeated, back to Olympus will go
 To the home of the Gods, constrain'd by the force of our hands.'
 So speaking the blue-hair'd God went first on the way
 To the mounded rampart of Hercules, scion of Zeus,
 The towering wall that the Trojans and Pallas had built
 In earlier days the great sea-monster to curb
 What time in his onset he came from the beach to the plain.
 There sate them Poseidon and Hera and others their peers,
 Clothing their shoulders in cloud impenetrable,
 But the party of Troy to Callicolone retir'd
 And sate there with Phoebus and Ares waster of towns;
 So watch'd they on either side and counsel devis'd,
 Nor ventur'd to mingle as yet in the dolorous fray,
 For Zeus from his station on high commanded them so.
 And straightway with horses and spearmen the whole of the
 plain
 Fill'd, and with bronze was ablaze, and earth with their tramp
 Rang, as together they rush'd. But, pre-eminent, two
 Eager for battle were striding to meet in their midst,
 Anchises' son, Aeneas, and godlike Achilles;
 And first Aeneas advanc'd with a threatening mien,
 Nodding his plume, and his shield impetuous held
 Guarding his breast and brandish'd his bronze-headed spear,
 But Pelides, opposite, rush'd like a lion on him,
 A ravening lion that enters a village of men

And the whole folk gather to slay him, and scornful at first
He strides on his way but, when one of the warrior youths
Strikes with his spear, he crouches and opens his jaws
And foams at the mouth and groans in his valiant heart
And lashes with swinging tail his ribs and his loins
On this side and that and goads himself on to the fight,
Then, glaring, by passion is driven some tribesman to slay
In the front of the throng or himself in the onset be slain;
E'en so by his passion and pride Achilles was driven
To meet and to slay Anchises' great-hearted son.
And when in their onset near to each other they were,
Swift-foot godlike Achilles address'd him the first:
'Why, Aeneas, so far in front of the crowd
Stand'st thou against me? Or yearns thy spirit to fight
In hope 'mong the horse-taming Trojans the lordship to hold
And the honour of Priam? Nay, tho' thou slay me in fight,
Not therefore will Priam the kingship lay in thy hands,
For sons o'er-many he has and is sound in his mind.
Or haply the Trojans have giv'n thee a princely demesne,
Ploughland and orchard, to dwell in and hold as thy own
If only thou slay me: but that methinks will be hard.
For once before I compell'd thee to flee from my spear;
Recall'st thou the day when thou wert alone with the kine
And I made thee from Ida's steeps hot-footed to run?
Swift were thy paces, and seldom thou lookedst behind,
To Lyrnessus fleeing for refuge, which I with the help
Of Zeus and Athena assail'd and the citadel storm'd
And its women of freedom bereft and carried away
Captive, and only thou wert protected by Zeus.
Yet not to-day will he save thee, if that is thy thought:
Therefore I warn thee to get thee back to the throng
And with arms encounter me not, lest evil befall,
For even a fool can be wise when he knows the event.'

And Aeneas straightway answer'd Achilles and spake:
'Think not with empty speeches, O Pelëides,
As a child to affright me, for skill'd am I as thyself
To taunt and revile or to utter the word that is meet.
Each other's parents and lineage well do we know
Having heard on the lips of men their glory proclaim'd,
Tho' neither the other's parents has seen with his eyes;
For thou, as they tell, art of blameless Peleus the son
And thy mother is fair-hair'd Thetis, a Nymph of the sea,
And I of the noble Anchises boast me the son
And 'twas Aphrodite, a Goddess, that bore me to him:

Of these shall one or the other mourn for a son
This day, for verily not with impotent words
Will the issue be seal'd when we from the battle depart.
'Tis Zeus that increases or minishes valour in men
Ev'n as he pleases, for Zeus is Lord over all:
Come then, forbear we with childish pratings to strive
Standing here in the midmost onset of war.
Revilings in plenty there are, for me as for thee,
And a ship of a hundred thwarts for the burden were small;
For glib is the tongue of a man, unnumber'd the words
That he draws from his store, and boundless the range of his
speech,

And whatso one say, as good shall he hear in return.
But where is the need that we bandy words on the field
Wrangling each against each in soul-wasting strife
Like quarrelsome women that, waxing hot in their wrath,
Come forth on the highway and brawl and utter abuse
Truthful or lying, for anger will prompt them to lie?
But not by speeches my eager heart shalt thou turn
From fighting with spears: for battle then let us prepare,
Each other's manhood to prove with weapons of bronze.'

So spake he and drave his ponderous spear at the shield
Mighty and dread, and loudly it rang with the blow;
But Pelides was holding the shield away from himself
Fearing the stroke, for he deem'd that the long-shadow'd spear
Of brave Aeneas would easily pierce through its folds
Fond man! nor knew he the truth, or forgot that he knew,
That nowise lightly the glorious gifts of a God
To the force of a mortal's hand will bow them or yield:
So now Aeneas' javelin brake not nor pierc'd
His shield, for the gold resisted, the gift of the God.
And Achilles brandish'd in turn his long-shadow'd spear
At Aeneas and smote on the mighty orb of his shield
By the outermost rim, where the bronze ran thinnest around
And thinnest the hide overlay; and the Pelian ash
Drave right through and the shield crack'd loud at the blow.
Now Aeneas, holding the shield away from himself,
Crouch'd, dreading the stroke, and the spear flew over his back
And lodg'd in the earth, but the plates were sunder'd apart
Of the sheltering shield, and he, having scap'd from the point,
Stood rooted, and anguish sore brought tears to his eyes,
Affrighted that all too near him the javelin had struck.
And Achilles, drawing his sword, rush'd madly on him
Shouting his terrible cry, but the other a stone

Grasp'd in his hand, enormous, that two could not lift
Of the men of to-day, but he wielded it lightly alone.

And now had he struck Pelides, ev'n as he charg'd,
On helmet or shield that had warded him surely from death,
And Achilles in turn had bereft him of life with his sword,
But Poseidon, the Earth-shaker, straightway mark'd him and
turn'd

To the other Immortals beside him and thus to them spake:

'Woe's me! Aeneas to Hades shall speedily go,
Great-hearted warrior, slain by Pelëides,
If the words he obey of Apollo, the far-shooting God,
Fond fool! for the God will nowise save him from death.
But wherefore thus in his innocence suffers he ill
For guilt not his own, when his offerings are pleasing to us
And to all the Gods in the spacious Heaven that dwell?
Come, let us lead him apart and save him from death
That the son of Zeus be not angry when Pelëides
Slay him, for destin'd he is by Fate to escape
Lest the offspring of Dardanus perish and leave not a trace;
For Dardanus' seed has Cronion cherish'd the most
Of all that the daughters of men have borne him on earth,
But Priam's seed, as ye know, he has hated of old.
Soon Aeneas shall reign o'er the Trojans with power,
And his children's children, all that hereafter are born.'
And to him did the great-eyed Goddess, Hera, reply:
'Shaker of Earth, with thyself take counsel, not us,
If Aeneas thou purpose to save or wilt leave him to die,
So brave as he is, at the hands of Pelëides;
For many an oath have Pallas Athena and I
Among the Immortals by many witnesses sworn
Never to ward from the Trojans the day of their doom
Not even when Ilion shall burn with ravening fire
And they that burn it the sons of Achæa shall be.'

But Poseidon, the Earth-shaker, soon as the speech he had
heard,
Went straightway up through the fight and the clashing of
spears

And found Aeneas and glorious Pelëides;
Then presently shed he a mist and darken'd the eyes
Of Achilles Pelëides, and the bronze-headed ash
From out of the shield of brave Aeneas he drew.
And the spear in front of the feet of Achilles he laid
But Aeneas he swung and lifted high o'er the earth:
O'er ranks full many of heroes and many a horse

Aeneas sprang as he soar'd in the hand of the God
And lighted anon at the uttermost verge of the field
On ground where the tribes Cauconian arm'd for the fray;
And Poseidon, the Earth-shaker, came and stood at his side
And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
'Aeneas, who of the Gods thus bids thee to fight
Infatuate man! with Peleus' vehement son,
More dear to the Gods and a better man than thyself?
Give back from the fight whenever thou meetest with him
Lest, spite of thy fate, to the house of Hades thou go:
But, whenso Achilles has met the doom of his death,
Then take courage and fight in the front of the press,
For none of the other Achaeans shall slay thee in war.'
So spake he and left him there, having shown him his fate,
And at once from Achilles' eyelids the shadow he purg'd
Of magical mist, and Achilles star'd with his eyes
And, greatly troubled, his valiant spirit address'd:
'Ye Gods! a marvel indeed I behold with my eyes;
My spear lies here on the ground, yet nowhere I see
The Trojan at whom I hurl'd it, intending to slay.
Aeneas then is verily dear to the Gods,
He also, albeit I deem'd that his boasting was vain:
Away with him then! not soon will he tempt me again
Having scap'd this once, to his joy, from the hazards of death.
But come, I will call on the war-loving Danaans now,
And of other Trojans afield make trial in arms.'

And to each one he call'd as along the battalions he leapt:
'Ye noble Achaeans, stand not so far from the foe:
Let man match man in the field and be eager to fight.
'Tis hard for a single warrior, strong tho' he be,
To deal with a host, nor hope I to fight with them all:
Not even Ares himself, immortal, a God,
Nor Athena the odds could oppose or the labour endure.
But all I can do, with hands and with feet and with thews,
I vow, no whit will I slacken, nay, never so little,
But right through their ranks will I go, nor shall any, methinks,
Of the Trojans rejoice that come within range of my spear.'
So spake he to cheer them, and glorious Hector in turn
To the Trojans call'd as his face at Achilles he set:
'High-hearted Trojans, fear ye not Pelëides;
With words I also even Immortals could fight,
But 'tis hard with a spear, for the Gods are stronger by far;
Nor shall even Achilles all his speeches fulfil,
For some in the midway balk'd of achievement shall be.

Him now will I face, tho' his hands be even as fire,
Yea, tho' as fire be his hands and his spirit as steel.'
So spake he to cheer them: the Trojans levell'd their spears
And stood and the war-cry awak'd, and in spirit were one.
But Apollo, standing by Hector, a word to him spake:
'Hector, challenge Achilles no more in the van
But wait for him midmost the throng in the roar of the fight,
Lest haply he spear thee or slay thee from near with the sword.'
So spake he, and Hector again fell back to the ranks
In fear and amaze, when he heard the voice of a God.

But Achilles leapt on the Trojans, girded with power,
Shouting his terrible cry, and Iphition slew
Otrynteus' valiant son, a captain of hosts,
Whom a Naiad bore to Otrynteus sacker of towns
'Neath snow-capp'd Tmolus in fertile Hyda his home;
Him, as he charg'd, Pelides struck with his spear
On the crown of his head, and the skull was broken in two
And he fell with a crash, and Achilles exulted and cried:
'Low liest thou, son of Otrynteus, redoubtable man!
Here is thy death, but in Hyda afar was thy birth
By the lake Gygaean, where fish-teeming Hyllus, they say,
And eddying Hermus water thy father's demesne.'
So spake he, and darkness shrouded Iphition's eyes
And the tires of the Danaan chariots mangled his corpse
In the front of the fight. And Achilles over him slew
Antenor's son, Demóleon stalwart in war,
Piercing his temple-bone through the cheek-piece of bronze;
For the brazen brim of the helmet stay'd not the point,
But it pass'd through helmet and bone, and the brain in his skull
Was shatter'd and spilt: and so was his eagerness tam'd.
Hippodamas next, as he leapt from his car to the ground
Fleeing before him, he smote in the back with a spear,
And he roar'd expiring, ev'n as a bull that is dragg'd
By youths to Poseidon's altar in Helice roars,
For in such on his feast-day is ever the Earth-shaker's joy:
E'en so Hippodamas roar'd and his spirit was fled.
But Achilles next after godlike Polydore went,
Priam's son, by his father forbidden to fight
As being the youngest-born and the dearest to him
Of his sons, surpassing them all in fleetness of foot:
E'en then, in his boyish folly, he rush'd through the van
Displaying his speed till he lost his piteous life,
For him did swift-foot Achilles strike with a spear,
As he darted by, in the back, where the buckles of gold

Fasten'd his belt and the plates of his corslet o'erlapp'd;
Right through to his navel the point of the javelin drove,
And he fell on his knee with a cry and darkness o'erspread
His eyes, and he clasp'd his bowels as over he roll'd.

But when Hector that well-lov'd brother, Polydore, saw
Clasping his bowels to him, as he sank to the earth,
A mist fell over his eyes nor longer he brook'd
To range at distance but rush'd on Pelëides
Like a flame of fire and brandish'd his bronze-headed spear.
And he, when he saw, sprang up exulting and cried:
'Lo now, the man that has wounded my soul to the quick
By slaying my dear-prized comrade. No more shall we skulk
Avoiding each other along the highways of war.'
And on godlike Hector he lour'd and a word to him spake:
'Come near, that the sooner the goal of death thou mayst
reach.'

And to him, naught daunted, bright-plum'd Hector replied:
'Hope not with empty speeches, O Pelëides,
As a child to affright me, for skill'd am I as thyself
To taunt and revile or to utter the word that is meet.
I know thou art strong and a man far better than I;
Howbeit the issue must lie on the knees of the Gods
Whether I, though feebler, the life of the stronger shall take
With a cast of my spear, for sharp it has proven ere now.'
So spake he and brandish'd and cast, but Athena the spear
With a breath (and she breathed but lightly) turn'd from its
aim

At godlike Achilles, and back to Hector it flew
And impotent fell at his feet. And Achilles in turn
With his spear set fiercely upon him, hot for his blood,
Shouting his terrible cry; but Apollo with ease,
For He is a God, sav'd Hector and hid him in mist.
Thrice did swift-foot Achilles rush on his foe
With his bronze-headed spear and thrice the mist did he cleave,
But the fourth time when he charg'd, in strength as a God,
With a dreadful cry he address'd great Hector and spake:
'Dog, so again thou escapest imminent death;
Yet near was thy bane if Apollo had sav'd not thy life,
To whom thou surely must pray mid the clashing of spears.
Yet mark thou my word: I shall meet thee hereafter and slay
If anywhere one of the Gods my helper may be.
But now will I match me with others, whomso I find.'
So spake he and, casting, Dryops pierc'd through the neck,
Who fell at his feet; but him did he leave where he lay

And Philétor's son, Demúchus, a good man and tall,
Stay'd with a stroke on the knee and, drawing his sword,
Straightway clos'd on his foe and bereft him of life;
Läogonus next and Dardanus, Bias's sons,
He assail'd in their chariot and smote, and both to the ground,
The one by spear-cast the other by sword-cut, he hurl'd.
But Tros, the son of Alastor, clasping his knees,
Begg'd him to make him his captive and leave him his life
Nor slay with the sword but pity him, young like himself,
Fond wretch! and knew not the ruthless rage of his foe
For nowise gentle he was nor tender of heart
But hungry for blood: and ev'n as he clutch'd at his knees
Entreating, Achilles drave through his liver the sword,
And dark blood pour'd from the liver, filling his lap,
And he swoon'd and the darkness of death o'ershadow'd his
eyes.

So fell he, and Mulius next he assail'd from behind
With a blow on the ear, and the spear-head, piercing his brain,
Came through by the other ear; and Echeclus he smote
With a stroke of his hilted sword on the crown of the head,
And the blade was hot with his blood, and the darkness of death
And Fate's imperious hand laid hold on his eyes.
Deucalion next, where the elbow-muscles are strung,
He smote with his spear, transfixing his arm with the point,
And he, seeing death before him, awaited his doom,
For his arm hung limp, and Achilles swept with his sword
Both helmet and head from his neck, and marrow and gore
Gush'd from his spine as his corpse lay stretch'd on the ground.

As rages through woodland and valley a furious fire
On a sun-scorch'd hill, and the forest burns to its depths,
For the driving wind whirls flame upon this side and that,
So raged he on every side like a God with his spear
Busy with slaying, and black earth ran with the blood.
And even as broad-brow'd bullocks at harvest are yok'd
The white-grain'd barley to tread on a well-built floor
And 'tis soon trodd'n out 'neath the feet of the loud-lowing
bulls,

E'en so did the strong-hoov'd horses of valiant Achilles
Trample the corpses and shields, and the axle beneath
Was spatter'd with gore, and the rails on the chariot-side
With blood-drops were dabbled, flung by the hooves of the
steeds

And the tires of the wheels; for Achilles on glory was set,
Flecking with carnage his irresistible hands.

*Achilles fights with the river Scamander and drives the
Trojans within their gates.*

BUT when to the ford they were come of the fair-flowing
river,
Eddying Xanthus whom Zeus immortal begat,
Then, sundering the Trojan phalanxes, part he pursued
Towards Troy o'er the plain, where the Danaans had yesterday
fled

While glorious Hector raged uncheck'd with his spear.
There stream'd they in flight to the city, blinded by mist
That Hera had spread in their path, but half of their host
Were penn'd by the banks of the silvery-eddy Xanthus
And plung'd therein with a splash and a roar, and the bed
Of the deep-sunk channel rang with their shouts as they swam
Hither and thither, whirl'd by the eddying wave.

As locusts rise in a swarm to fly to a stream
Before the onset of fire, and the weariless flame
Flares up with a sudden gust and they cower in the bed,
So eddying Xanthus was fill'd with the noise and the throng
Of horses and men, as Achilles drove them in rout.
And heav'n-born Achilles, leaving his spear on the bank
Propp'd 'mong the tamarisk-trees, leapt in like a God,
Arm'd only with sword, and devis'd grim deeds in his heart
Smiting them right and left, and piteous rose
The groans of the strick'n, and the water was redden'd with
blood.

As before a great-bellied dolphin the fishes in shoals
Crowd every nook and recess of a fair-haven'd bay
In terror, for whomso he catches he swallows amain,
So crowded the Trojans beneath the precipitous banks
Of that dreadful stream: and, when weary of slaughter he was,
Twelve youths did he choose from out of the river alive
An atonement to be for the death of Menoetius' son;
Forth he hal'd them, affrighted and helpless as fawns,
And bound them behind their backs with the pliable straps
That they wore on their pleated doublets under the mail
And gave to his comrades to lead them away to the ships,
And himself yet again made onset, for slaughter athirst.

And straightway a son of Dardanid Priam he met,
Lycáon, in flight from the river, whom once he had caught
Unawares in his father's orchard and brought him away
In a night-raid: for Lycaon was cutting therein
Young shoots from a fig-tree to make him a chariot-rail
When he found, unlook'd for, in godlike Achilles his bane
Who took him and sent him by ship and sold him abroad
In populous Lemnos to Jason's son for a price;
But a guest-friend of Priam, the Imbrian Eëtion,
Free'd him by ransom and sent him to goodly Arisba
Whence, sailing in secret, to Troy he return'd and his home.
Elev'n brief days he had joy of his friends and his kin
From Lemnos redeem'd; on the twelfth, Heav'n gave him again
Into the hands of Achilles, since fated he was
His reluctant soul to the house of Hades to send;
And when swift-foot godlike Achilles saw him disarm'd,
Bare of helmet and shield, no spear in his hand,
For his arms he had flung to the ground as he tried to escape
Sweating with fear and for weariness faint in his knees,
Then spake the hero in wrath to his valiant heart:
'Ye Gods! a marvel indeed I behold with my eyes;
Surely the great-hearted Trojans, all that I slew,
Will rise from the misty darkness of Hades again
Seeing that this craven, whom once in Lemnos I sold,
Has escap'd the pitiless day, nor was even restrain'd
By the deep of the hoary sea, that has many a one stay'd.
Come then, now shall he taste of the point of my spear
That so I may see, and know for a truth in my mind,
Whether life-giving earth that even the strongest restrains
Can hold him down, or from thence he shall also return.'
So mus'd he and stood, but Lycaon approach'd him aghast,
Eager his knees to embrace, for he yearn'd in his soul
From the black fate of an evil death to escape.
And Achilles lifted his spear, intending to slay,
But Lycaon, running beneath it, clutch'd at his knees,
And the spear went over his back and stood in the earth
Hungry to sate itself in the flesh of a man;
And Lycaon besought him, with one hand clasping his knees
And holding the spear with the other, nor loos'd he his hold
As he utter'd his voice and winged words to him spake:
'I cry thee mercy, Achilles, have pity on me
Revering the sacred bond of my suppliance;
For at thy board Demeter's grain did I taste
That day when thou took'st me by force in my father's demesne

And soldest me captive, away from my father and friends,
In Lemnos o'ersea, and a hundred oxen I fetch'd
And thrice so dearly was ransom'd by Ætion.
'Tis the twelfth dawn now since to Ilion's keep I return'd
After suffering much, and again has ruinous Fate
Deliver'd me into thy hands. Zeus surely must hate me
To make me thy captive again, and brief was the life
Laothoe gave me, daughter of Altes the old,
Altes, that over the war-loving Leleges rules
Where he dwells on Pedasus' rocks by Satnœis stream.
His daughter, with many another, to Priam was wed
And two sons bore him, and thou wilt murder us both;
For one 'mong the foremost fighters thou slewest e'en now,
Godlike Polydore, pierc'd by the pitiless bronze,
And here like evil is mine since hope I have none
To escape from thy hands, when a God has giv'n me to thee.
One word more will I say, do thou lay it to heart:
Spare me for this, that the same womb gender'd me not
As Hector who slew thy comrade so gentle and brave.'

So spake to Achilles Priam's glorious son
With suppliant words, but a voice implacable heard:
'Fond fool! proffer no ransom, nor speak thou of it:
So long as Patroclus had met not the day of his fate,
So long was it liefer to me the Trojans to spare,
And many I captur'd alive and sold them o'ersea.
But now there is no man living that death shall escape
Of those that in Troyland God shall deliver to me
And least of them all a scion of Priam the King:
Aye, friend! thou also must die: why moanest thou thus?
Patroclus has died, a man far better than thou;
And seest thou myself, how stalwart I am and how fair?
And a good man too is my sire, and my mother divine,
Yet even o'er me hang death and imperious Fate:
Morning or ev'ning or noonday, the hour shall arrive
When my life also someone in battle will take,
Perhaps with a spear, perhaps with a shaft from a string.'
He spake, and Lycaon's knees and his heart were as lead,
And Achilles' spear he relax'd and sat with his hands
Outspread to his foe, and Achilles, drawing his sword,
On his collar-bone smote by the neck and buried in him
The blade of the trenchant sword, and prone on the earth
He lay, and the red blood flow'd from him, dyeing the ground.
Him then by the foot Pelides hurl'd down the stream,
And, exulting over him, winged words to him spake:

'Lie thou there, with the fishes licking thy wounds
Heedless of burial rites: by thy mother unmourn'd
Nor laid on a funeral bed, Scamander shall bear thee
And roll in his eddying wave to the broad-bosom'd sea,
And fishes shall leap and under the ripple shall dart
To eat of the fat of Lycaon, glistening white.
So perish ye all till Ilion's fastness we reach,
Ye, fleeing before me, and I, destroying behind;
Nor shall even the fair-flowing silvery-eddy River
Avail you, to whom from of old ye sacrifice bulls
And feed his eddies with whole-hoov'd horses alive:
E'en so ye shall die the death, until each one has paid
The price for Patroclus's blood and the lives of them all
That ye slew at the swift-going ships while I tarried from war.'

So spake he, and still more angry the River at heart
Wax'd, and debated within him how he should stay
Godlike Achilles and doom from the Trojans avert;
But meanwhile the son of Peleus with long-shadow'd spear
Leapt upon Asteropaeus, eager to slay,
Pelegon's son, whom the maid Periboea had borne,
Acesámenus' eldest daughter, to Axius' stream,
Having lain with the eddying River, a maid with a God.
On Asteropaeus he rush'd, but he faced him and stood,
Two spears in his hand, for Xanthus courage and strength
Had breath'd in his heart, being wroth for the death of the
youths

That Aeacides, unpitying, slew in his stream;
And when in their onset near to each other they were,
Him first did swift-foot godlike Achilles address:
'Who art thou, and whence, that against me darest to stand?
Unblest are the parents whose children match them with me.'
And to him made answer Pelegon's glorious son:
'Why ask'st thou my lineage, great-hearted Pelëides?
From far am I come, from deep-soil'd Paéonia,
Leading the long-spear'd Paeons: and short is the time,
Elev'n days ago, since in Ilion first I arriv'd.
My line from a River, the broad-flowing Axius, springs
Who my father begat, that was Pelegon fam'd with the spear:
And now, Pelides, to battle address we ourselves.'
So spake he, defiant, and godlike Achilles at once
Brandish'd his Pelian ash, but Pelegon's son,
Two-handed, with both his spears at his enemy aim'd,
And one of them smote on his shield but pierc'd it not through,
For the gold on the shield resisted, the gift of the God;

But his right elbow the other graz'd as it flew
 Drawing his crimson blood, and beyond him the point,
 Eager to batten on flesh, was fix'd in the earth.
 And Achilles brandish'd in turn his straight-flying ash
 And hurl'd it at Asteropaeus, intending to slay,
 But, missing his man, he hit the bank of the stream,
 And buried to half of its length was his good ashen spear;
 And Achilles, drawing the keen-edg'd sword at his thigh,
 Leapt furiously on him where vainly he tugg'd with his hands
 To pluck Pelides' weapon from out of the bank.
 Thrice did he shake it, striving to loosen its hold,
 And thrice he relax'd: but, the fourth time that he tried,
 He made as to bend and break the spear-shaft of ash
 But ere then Achilles was on him and reft him of life:
 In the belly beside the navel he smote, and at once
 Out gush'd his bowels and darkness cover'd his eyes
 As gasping he lay, and Achilles, trampling his breast,
 Stripp'd off his arms and exulting over him spake:
 'Lie there! it is hard for a man to strive with the sons
 Of mighty Cronion, tho' sprung from a River he be.
 Thou boastest thyself of a broad-flowing River the seed,
 But I of the lineage of Zeus avow me to be:
 A man begat me that rules o'er the Myrmidon folk,
 Peleus, the son of Aeacus offspring of Zeus.
 By as much as Zeus is stronger than murmuring streams
 So much is the seed of Zeus made stronger than theirs,
 Nay, thou hast close beside thee a River most great
 If hé may avail thee, but none can fight against Zeus;
 Not even the Lord Achelöus can match him with Zeus,
 Nor the great strength of deep-flowing Oceanus
 From whom all rivers that are, and every sea,
 And fountains and springs and great wells flow and are fed;
 Yea, Ocean himself is afraid of the lightning of Zeus
 And his dreadful thunder, when out of the heaven He peals.'
 So spake he and drew from the bank his bronze-headed spear
 And left there Asteropaeus, despoil'd of his life,
 Lying in the sands, and the dark wave lapp'd him about
 And straightway the eels and fishes were busy with him
 Nibbling and tearing the dainty fat from his reins.
 But Achilles in chase of the horse-driving Paeons was gone
 That still in the eddying river huddled in fear
 As when first their bravest they saw in the murderous fight
 Slain by the hand and the sword of Pelëides;
 And then Thersilochus, Mydon and Astypylus,

Mnesus, Thrasius, Aenius, brave Ophleustes
Slew he, and more of the Paeon men would have slain,
But then the eddying River address'd him in wrath;
From the depths of an eddy he spake with the voice of a man:
'Achilles, thy strength and thy evil doings exceed
The measure of men, for Immortals war on thy side.
If Zeus has deliver'd the Trojans wholly to death,
Drive them at least from my bed ere thou wreakest thy will,
For my pleasant waters are fill'd with the corpses of men
Nor can I my stream any longer roll to the sea
Chok'd with the dead, and thou slayest insatiately;
Stay then thy hand, thou terrible captain of hosts.'
And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Be it as thou wilt, O Scamander nurtur'd of Zeus,
But ne'er will I cease the o'erweening Trojans to slay
Ere I pen them in Troy and of Hector trial have made
Whether he or I shall the other o'ercome in the field.'
So saying he set on the Trojans, in strength as a God,
And then did the eddying River Apollo address:
'Out on it, Lord of the Bow, great scion of Zeus,
Ill dost thou keep His behests when He charg'd thee erewhile
To stand by the Trojans and help them till even should come,
With light late-setting, to darken the fields of the earth.'

So spake he, and spear-fam'd Achilles sprang from the bank
And leapt in his midst, but he rush'd on him, swollen and
strong,

And stirr'd his waters to turmoil and swept down the dead
Slain by Achilles, that cumber'd his eddying stream;
These cast he forth, with a roar like a bellowing bull,
On the bank, but the living he sav'd in his cavernous bed
Hiding them here and there in his eddying depths.
Terribly round Pelides the turbulent wave
Tower'd and beat on his shield, nor avail'd he to stand
Firm on his feet; but, grasping an elm in his hands,
Tall, well-grown, that had fall'n uprooted and torn
The bank away in its fall, and damm'd all the stream
With its tangle of branches and bridg'd the river itself
As it lay at its length, Pelides sprang from the wave
And hasten'd with speedy steps to escape o'er the plain,
Affrighted and aw'd. But the great God ceas'd not his rage
But roll'd dark-crested upon him, eager to stay
Achilles from slaying and doom from the Trojans avert.
And Achilles, as far as a spear-cast, darted away
Swift as the eagle's swoop that the Hunter is call'd,

The strongest at once and the swiftest of creatures that fly:
So speedily flew he away, and the bronze on his breast
Dreadfully rang as he sped before him in flight
While the River behind rush'd on with a thunderous roar.

As when from a dark-welling spring a waterer leads
The current along a trench through his gardens and crops,
Mattock in hand the appointed channel he clears
And the stream, as onward it flows, each pebble disturbs
And sweeps them along, and gurgles gathering speed
Where the ground slopes down, and even its leader o'ertakes:
E'en so did the wave of the River Achilles o'ertake
For all his fleetness, for Gods are stronger than men.
And often as swift-foot godlike Achilles essay'd
To stand his ground and learn whether every God
That dwells in the spacious heaven against him was leagued,
So often a mighty wave of the God-nurtur'd stream
Would beat on his back from above, and upward he sprang
Sore vex'd in his heart, while the rush of the flood underneath
Wearied his knees, devouring the ground at his feet.
And Achilles look'd up to heaven and cried with a groan:
'O Father, will none of the Gods take pity on me
And save from the River? Thereafter befall me what may!
Yet none of the Heavenly Ones so much is to blame
As my own dear mother who cozen'd my wits with her lies,
Saying that under the rampart of Ilion town,
Strick'n by Apollo's swift-wing'd shafts, I should die.
Would that Hector had slain me, the best of his breed;
Then brave the slayer had been and brave were the slain.
But now by a sorrier death I am fated to die,
Trapp'd in the mighty flood like a swine-herding boy
That is drown'd in a torrent, essaying to cross it in storm.'
So spake he, and quickly Poseidon and Pallas o'erheard
And came and stood at his side, in the likeness of men;
And, clasping his hand in their own, they pledg'd him their aid,
And the first one to speak was Poseidon Shaker of Earth:
'Flee not, O Pelëides, nor be thou afraid,
Such helpers thou hast in us twain come down from the Gods,
Approv'd of Cronion, e'en Pallas Athena and me.
To be vanquish'd in fight by a River is nowise thy doom,
For soon he will tire and abate; thou shalt see it thyself.
But come, do thou hear and obey while we counsel thee well;
Hold not thy hand nor cease thou from hazardous war
Till in Ilion's far-fam'd walls the host thou have pent
Of the Trojans flying, but when Hector of life thou hast reft

Then straightway return: this glory we give thee to win.'

Thus having spoken, they sought the Immortals their peers,
But he to the plain, for their bidding was strong upon him,
Went forward: and over the plain the flood-waters pour'd
And everywhere beautiful armour was floating about
And slain men's corpses, but lightly his knees he could move
As he press'd on his course 'gainst the current, nor stay'd him
at all

The far-flowing tide, for Athena had breath'd in him strength.
Yet Scamander ceas'd not his fierceness but rag'd even more
'Gainst Pelëides, for crestwise his billow he curl'd
Surging on high and to Simöis call'd with a shout:
'Dear brother, our strength let us join Pelides to stay
Who else the city of Priam will speedily sack,
For the Trojans no longer the stress of the battle endure.
Haste to the rescue, and fill with water thy streams
From all thy fountains, and all thy torrents let loose,
And a towering wave heap up, and the roaring awake
Of stumps and of stones, that this savage man we may tame
That is lording it here and deems him the equal of Gods.
For neither, I ween, shall strength nor beauty avail
Nor the glorious armour, that deep in my waters shall sink
With slime overlaid, and himself I will wrap in my sands
Heaping him round with the countless shingle and silt,
And the Argives shall know not where they may gather his
bones,

So wide and so deep the shroud that I cover him with:
His tomb shall be piled where he falls, nor need shall he have
Of barrow or mound when his fun'ral the Danaans make.'

He spake and at once on Achilles tumultuous rush'd
Seething with foam and the blood and the corpses of men;
Then darkly a wave of the River nurtur'd from heaven
Toppling stood and Achilles was like to o'erwhelm
When Hera, crying aloud in her terror for him
Lest the great deep-eddying River should sweep him away,
Straightway her well-lov'd son Hephaestus address'd;
'Arise, O Limper, my child, for we deem'd that with thee
Eddying Xanthus was match'd in the strife of the Gods;
Haste to the rescue, displaying thy fiery strength,
And I will go to awaken from out of the sea
Strong storm of the winds of the West and the whitening South.
That the Trojan dead and their arms they may utterly burn
Fanning the angry flames: and do thou by the banks
Of Xanthus burn up his trees and whelm him in fire

Nor let him by gentle words, or by threatening, turn
Thy purpose or stay thy rage, till thou hearest me shout
Commanding thee spare: then hold thy unwearying fire.'
She spake: and her son his fire, fierce-burning, prepar'd,
And first it blaz'd on the plain, and the dead were consum'd,
And parch'd was the plain and the shining waters were stay'd;
As quickly in autumn the North Wind parches a plot
Fresh-water'd, and he that tills it is glad in his heart,
So quickly the plain was parch'd and the corpses consum'd.
And next on the river his gleaming fire did he turn,
And elms and willows and tamarisk bushes were burn'd,
And lotus and rush and galingale wither'd and burn'd
That round the streams of the river in multitude grew.
And the fishes and eels 'neath the eddies were vex'd with the
heat

And tumbled this way and that in the fair-flowing stream,
Scorch'd by the crafty Hephaestus's fiery breath;
And the strong River was scorch'd and nam'd him and spake:
'Hephaestus, none of the Gods can match him with thee
Nor think I to fight with thee now, fierce-blazing with fire.
Cease strife; tho' godlike Achilles from Ilion chase
These Trojans, what matters to me either succour or strife?'

Burning he spake, and his fair streams bubbled with heat:
As a cauldron bubbles and boils with the onset of fire
Melting the lard and the brawn of a well-fatted hog,
And spirts with the heat when faggots are laid underneath,
So burn'd his streams with the fire and boil'd in their bed;
No more would he flow to the sea but his current restrain'd
Afflicted by crafty Hephaestus's fiery breath,
And Hera besought he and winged words to her spake:
'O Hera, why has thy son thus chosen me out
To vex above others? Not I so much am to blame
As all the other Immortals, the helpers of Troy.
But lo! I will cease, if thou biddest me cease and thy son
Hephaestus also will cease, and an oath will I swear
Never to ward from the Trojans the day of their doom
Not even when Ilion shall burn with ravening fire
And they that burn it the sons of Achaea shall be.'
And Hera, the white-arm'd Goddess, hearing his speech
Straightway her well-lov'd son Hephaestus address'd:
'Hephaestus, my glorious son, refrain thou thy hand:
Beseems not for mortals' sake an Immortal to scourge.'
She spake, and the God extinguish'd his fierce-burning fires
And the wave once more in its bed roll'd down to the sea.

So Xanthus was tam'd, and they rested and ceas'd from their feud,

Held back by Hera, tho' still she forgot not her wrath;
And the other Immortals to high Olympus return'd,
Some angry at heart and some triumphant, and sate
By the cloud-girt Father's side. But Achilles the while
Still was slaying the Trojans, both horses and men;
As when smoke from a fire to the spacious heaven ascends
In a blazing city, lit by the wrath of the Gods,
And makes a labour for all and for many a woe,
So made Achilles both labour and sorrow for Troy.

Now Priam stood on the sacred tower of the wall
And was ware of the giant form of Achilles below
And the Trojans huddling before him, and help there was none,
And groaning he started to go from the tower to the ground
And commanded the gallant warders defending the wall:
'Hold open the gates in your hands till the host in their flight
The fastness have won, for Achilles hard on their heels
Drives them like cattle, and deadly work will there be.
But once they are gather'd within and a breathing-time have,
Then close ye the portals again and the well-locking doors,
For I fear lest this bloodthirsty man our threshold o'erleap.'
He spake, and they thrust back the bolts and open'd the gates
And deliverance brought, and Apollo leapt to the front
To succour the Trojans and ward destruction from Troy.
Straight for the city they made and the shelter of walls,
Parch'd with thirst and begrim'd with the dust of the plain,
And ever Achilles drove them, for frenzy possess'd
His vehement heart and he thirsted glory to win.

Then would the sons of Achaea high-gated Troy
Have seiz'd, had not Phoebus godlike Agenor arous'd,
Antenor's son, a valiant man and a prince,
And courage breath'd in his heart, and himself at his side
Stood, on the oak-tree leaning but shrouded in mist,
To ward from Agenor the grievous issues of death.
And Agenor, marking Achilles sacker of towns,
Stood firm, tho' debating much in his wavering heart;
And, troubled, his own great spirit thus he address'd:
'Woe's me! If from mighty Achilles I turn me and flee
As the others flee that before him in panic are driven,
Yet into his hands shall I fall and a craven must die.
What then if I leave these others to scatter in flight
From Pelëides, and elsewhere fly on my feet
From the wall to the plain Iléan, if so I may reach

The spurs of Ida and lie in the underwood hid
And then, having bathed in the river, at evening return,
Cleans'd of my sweat and refresh'd, to Ilion's wall?
But wherefore thus does my spirit debate with herself?
I fear lest he mark me starting to run from the town
And, speeding after, o'ertake me by fleetness of foot:
Then hope had I none to escape the issues of death,
So strong as he is, exceeding the measure of men.
What then if I go to meet him in front of the wall?
Surely his flesh by the spear is vulnerable,
And one life only he has, and 'tis said among men
That mortal he is, tho' Zeus gives glory to him.'

So saying he gather'd himself for Achilles to wait,
For his valiant spirit was set to resist and to fight.
As a leopardess comes from her thick-set covert of bush
To affront a hunter, and feels no fear in her heart
Nor bethinks her of flight when she hears the baying of hounds;
Albeit the man first strike her with arrow or spear,
Yet, pierc'd by the shaft, her courage she cannot forget
Till she grapple with him or be slain in the onset herself,
E'en so Antenor's son, the godlike Agenor,
Thought not to flee ere Achilles he put to the proof
But, holding before him the mighty orb of his shield,
Aim'd at his foe with a spear, and shouted aloud:
'Most noble Achilles, thou surely didst hope in thy heart
This day the valiant Trojans' city to sack,
Fond dreamer! for woeful work is yet to be done
Since many and stalwart are we that dwell in her walls,
Who, shielding our parents dear and our children and wives,
Keep Ilion safe; but thy fate shall find thee to-day,
Redoubtable man tho' thou art and a warrior bold.'
So spake he and, hurling at once his strong-grappled spear,
Miss'd not the mark but smote on his leg by the knee,
And the new-wrought tin on his shin-bone terribly rang
With the dint, but the bronze rebounded from him that it
smote

Not piercing the greave, for the God's gift warding it off.
And Peleus' son on Agenor set in his turn
But Apollo suffer'd him not the glory to win
But caught Agenor away and veil'd him in mist
And sent him in peace from out of the fight to be gone;
And Achilles he kept by cunning away from the host,
For the God, in the very form of Agenor himself,
Before him appear'd, and Achilles dash'd in pursuit,

And while o'er the wheat-bearing plain the God he pursued
Edging His course, as He ran but a little in front,
To'rds the eddying stream (for Apollo lur'd him by guile
Ever to hope that still he might win in the race),
The host of the Trojans meanwhile came in a rout
Right gladly to Troy and the city was fill'd with their throng;
And none had the heart outside the gates of the town
To await his fellows or ask which friend had escap'd
And which had fallen in fight, but all through the gates
Pour'd headlong, whomso his feet and his swiftness might save.

Achilles fights with Hector and slays him and dragging him behind his chariot brings him to the Greek camp.

So they in the city of Troy, affrighted as fawns,
Cooling their sweat and drinking and slaking their thirst
Lean'd on the battlements fair, while the Danaan host
Drew near to the wall, on their shoulders sloping their shields;
But Hector did ruinous Fate hold fast in his place
Where in front of Troy by the Scaean gateway he stood.
Then Phoebus Apollo the son of Peleus address'd:
'Why, fleet-footed son of Peleus, pursuest thou me,
A mortal chasing a God? Thou knowest not yet,
In thy furious striving, that deathless I am and divine.
Thinkest thou not of the Trojans, gather'd in Troy
'Neath the shelter of walls while here thou hast wander'd afar?
Thou never canst slay me, for I am not subject to death.'
And, greatly troubled, Achilles address'd him and said:
'Thou hast foil'd me, Apollo, pestilent God that thou art,
Luring me on from the wall: else many a man
Had bitten the dust ere ever he came into Troy.
Now hast thou robb'd me of glory and lightly hast sav'd
The Trojans, since fear thou hast none of vengeance to come;
Sore shouldst thou rue it had I but the power to avenge.'
So spake he and Troywards was gone in the pride of his heart
Like some victorious horse in a chariot-race
When lightly it courses at full stride over the plain:
So swiftly Achilles mov'd with his feet and his knees.

Him was the old man Priam the first to discern
Where he sped o'er the plain like the blazing star in the heavens
That rises in autumn, whose beams most brilliantly
Shine mid the host of the stars in the darkness of night;
Orion's dog he is call'd among earth-dwelling men,
Brightest of stars, yet a sign of evil he is
For to hapless mortals he brings but fever and death:
So blaz'd on the breast of Achilles the bronze as he ran,
And the old man groan'd and beat on his head with his hands
Raising them high, and loudly he cried in his fear
Entreating his well-lov'd son where still at the gates
He awaited godlike Achilles, eager for fight;

And with hands outstretch'd he address'd him in piteous tone:
'Hector, my son, I pray thee, await not the man
Unaided, alone, lest thy Fate upon thee should come
At the hand of Achilles, a man far mightier than thou
And merciless. Would that as dear he were to the Gods
As to me! Then quickly should dogs and vultures devour
His flesh where he lay, and the anguish depart from my soul.
For of sons full many and brave he has made me bereft
Slaying or selling them captive in islands afar;
And two of my children, Lycaon and Polydore brave,
I see not e'en now 'mong the men that have throng'd into Troy,
The sons Laothœ bore me, a queen of her peers.
If they yet are alive in the camp, with bronze and with gold
Shall ransom be paid for them both from the store of our wealth,
For manifold treasure did Altes give with his child;
But if they are dead, yet in Hades' house shall they be
A grief to me and their mother who brought them to birth
But a short-liv'd sorrow to all the rest of our folk
If thou by the hand of Achilles die not but live.
Come then within, dear son, where still thou mayst save
The sons and daughters of Troy and the triumph from him
Mayst withhold and thyself of thy sweet life be not bereft.
Have pity also on me, still able to feel
Life's evil, whom Cronian Zeus on the pathway of age
By a grievous doom will destroy, having liv'd to behold
My sons slain, my daughters to slavery dragg'd,
My chambers profan'd, my kindred's innocent babes
Dash'd to the ground in the dreadful havoc of war
And my daughters-in-law made captive by Danaan hands.
Myself then last will the dogs at my door on the street
Tear and devour, when someone with pitiless bronze,
Arrow or spear, my body of life has bereft,
Yea, even the dogs that my own table has fed
Shall lie in my gateway, madden'd with drinking the blood
Of their dead master. A young man well it beseems
To be slain in battle and, mangled with pitiless bronze,
To lie on the field: tho' naked he lie, it is well,
But when ravening dogs the hoary head and the beard
And the secret parts of an old man murder'd defile,
For wretched mortals is naught more pitiable.'

So spake old Priam and seized and pluck'd from his head
The snow-white locks, but Hector persuaded he not.
Then Hecuba, weeping, lifted her voice in lament,
And loosen'd her robe, displaying a breast with her hand,

And thus through her tears in winged words to him spake:
'Hector, my son, have reverence and pity for me:
If ever this breast gave comfort and solace to thee,
Remember it now, dear son, and Achilles withstand
From within these walls nor his fury challenge afield.
Merciless man! if he slay thee, not on thy bed
Shall I wail thee, my own sweet blossom born of my womb,
Nor thy life so costlily wooed, but far from us both
Swift dogs by the Danaan ships thy flesh shall devour.'
So they with wailing and tears their dear son address'd
Entreating him sore, but Hector persuaded they not,
Who stood and the onset of mighty Achilles abode.

As a snake of the mountains waits in his hole for a man,
Gorg'd with poisons, and broods fell wrath in his heart
And dreadfully glares as he coils himself round in his hole,
So Hector with spirit unquenchable waited and stood
And rested his glittering shield on a pier of the wall;
Then, greatly troubled, his valiant heart he address'd:
'Ay me! if now I withdraw and re-enter the gates,
Polydamas first his reproaches will fasten on me,
For he urg'd me to lead the Trojans homeward again
This ruinous night when godlike Achilles arose,
And I heeded him not tho' better by far it had been;
And now, when my wanton folly an army has slain,
I blush lest the men and the long-rob'd women of Troy
Hear from the lips of another, meaner than I:
"Hector by trusting his prowess the host has undone."
Thus will they speak; and for me it were better by far
To face Achilles and, slaying him, homeward return
Or gloriously perish in front of the city myself.
Or what if, laying aside my helmet of bronze
And my high-boss'd shield and propping my spear on the wall,
Myself go forward and blameless Achilles address
And promise to give back Helen and with her the spoil,
All the possessions that Paris to Ilion brought
That day in the hollow ships—the beginning of strife—
For the sons of Atreus to take, and covenant too
To divide with the Argives the treasure that Ilion holds
And bind with a solemn oath the elders of Troy
To keep back nothing but equally share it with them?
But wherefore thus does my spirit debate with herself?
If I go to Achilles, how if he pity me not
Nor regard me at all but presently slay with the sword
As it were but a woman when once my armour is off?

No time is it now from wayside oak-tree or rock
To hold light talk with Achilles, like maiden and youth,
As maiden and youth hold dalliance one with another;
'Tis better the battle to join, and soon we shall know
To which of us two the Olympian glory will give.'

So mus'd he and stood, while Achilles clos'd on him fast
In strength as the War-god arm'd and tossing his plume;
O'er his right shoulder he brandish'd the Pelian ash,
His terrible spear, and around the bronze on him blaz'd
Like burning fire or the sun when he rises at dawn,
And Hector, beholding him, trembled, nor dar'd any more
To stay on his ground but in terror fled from the gates,
And Achilles after him darted, trusting his speed.
As a mountain falcon, the swiftest of creatures that fly,
Swoops lightly down from his height on a timorous dove
And she flees in her panic before him, eluding his stroke,
But still loud-screaming he swoops, intent on his prey:
So fiercely Achilles straight as his enemy flew,
And Hector fled 'neath the wall, fast plying his knees.
Past the look-out and wind-swept fig-tree they raced
Away from under the wall by the chariot-track,
Till they came to the fair-flowing springs whence issue the founts,
From a double source, of Scamander's eddying stream.
Warm water is one of the springs and from it a mist
Rises as though it were smoke from a furnace of fire,
But the other, ev'n as it flows in midsummer heat,
Is cold as water in frost or hailstone or snow,
There, by the springs, broad troughs for washing there were
Of stone well wrought, where the wives and daughters of Troy
Erewhile had been wont their snow-white garments to wash
In the days of the peace ere the sons of Achaea had come:
Past them they ran, one flying and one in pursuit,
Brave was the flyer, but mightier the other by far
That swiftly pursued, since not for a sacrifice-beast
Or an oxhide strove they, the prizes for fleetness of foot,
But the life of horse-taming Hector was set for their prize.
As in games victorious horses rapidly turn
At the goals on a course, and a great prize lies in the midst,
A tripod or woman, in honour of one that is dead,
So circled they thrice round the walls of the city of Troy
With flying feet, and the Gods look'd down on the race.

Still did swift-foot Achilles pursue him amain:
As a hound on a mountain starts from her covert a fawn
And chases her swiftly through many a valley and glade

And, though in a bush she couch her to baffle her foe,
Yet, scenting her tracks, he runs till he find her again,
So baffled not Hector fleet-footed Pelëides;
Oft as the flyer darted aside in the race
'Neath the well-built rampart, to seek the shelter of gates,
If haply the darts from above might succour his plight,
Still would Achilles gain on him, heading him off
To the plain, for himself towards the city he ever inclin'd.
As when in a dream the pursuer is foil'd in his chase
For vainly he seeks to o'ertake as the other to fly,
So neither could Hector escape nor Achilles o'ertake:
Yet never had Hector avoided the issue of death
If Apollo, his helper of old, had succour'd him not
For the last time, and breath'd in him swiftness and strength,
And godlike Achilles had signall'd not to his men
Forbidding to hurl against Hector their death-dealing spears,
Lest any one, striking, the glory should take from himself;
But when for the fourth time they had come to the springs,
Then did the Father his golden balances hang
And set in the scales two lots of outstretching death,
One for Achilles and one for horse-taming Hector,
And pois'd them, and Hector's day sank down in the scale
To Hades; and Phoebus Apollo was gone from his side.

But grey-eyed Athena came to Pelëides
And, standing beside him, winged words to him spake:
'Now have I hope, O Achilles darling of Zeus,
We two for the host of Achaea glory shall win
Having slain brave Hector, athirst tho' he be for the fight;
No longer safe can he be nor escape from our hands,
Not though far-shooting Apollo labour for him
And grovel before the Father, Olympian Zeus.
Stay thou, recovering thy breath, and to Hector will I
Go and persuade him to stand and affront thee in fight.'
She spake, and Achilles obey'd and rejoic'd in his heart
And lean'd on his bronze-pointed spear, recovering his breath,
And Athena left him and godlike Hector approach'd
In form and the strength of her voice like Dēiphobus,
And, standing beside him, winged words to him spake:
'Verily, brother, Achilles does violence to thee,
With swift feet chasing thee thus round Ilion's walls;
Come, let us stand and defend each other from him.'
And her did bright-plum'd Hector in answer address:
'Dēiphobus, truly of old thou wert dearest to me
Of the brotherhood-kin that to Priam Hecuba bore.

But now, of a truth, in my heart I shall honour thee more
Who daredst for my sake, seeing me sorely bested,
Come forth from the walls while the others tarry within.'
And him did the grey-eyed Goddess answer again:
'Dear brother, full often my father and mother belov'd
And my comrades besought me, entreating me each in his turn,
To tarry within, so greatly they tremble and fear;
But my heart in my breast was wrung with sorrow for thee.
Now fight we, sternly resolv'd; no more let there be
Sparing of spears, that Achilles' power we may know,
Whether slaying us two our blood-stain'd arms he shall take
To the ships or himself by thy own spear vanquish'd may be.'

So spake Athena and craftily led him afield;
And when in their onset near to each other they were,
First did bright-plum'd Hector Achilles address:
'No longer, O Pelëides, will I flee from thee now
As when thrice round the city I ran nor endur'd to await
Thy furious onset; for now my spirit is steel'd
To stand and affront thee, and either to slay or be slain.
But come, to witness our pledge let us call on the Gods
Who of covenants surely the trustiest guardians are,
That in no outrageous sort will I treat thee, if Zeus
Grant me to hold my ground and bereave thee of life:
But when, O Achilles, thy glorious arms I have spoil'd,
Thy corpse will I give to thy comrades. And swear thou the like.'
And, louting upon him, swift-foot Achilles replied:
'Speak not of covenants, Hector, accurs'd as thou art;
'Twixt lions and men no pledges of faith there can be
And the wolf and the sheep can nowise dwell in accord
But hatred must nurse for each other continually,
And it never can happen that Hector and I shall be friends
Nor pledge can there be between us till one of us fall
And glut with his blood fell Ares, insatiate God.
Bethink thee of all thy prowess, for now it behoves
To prove thee a skilful spearman and warrior bold;
Escape there is none any more, for Pallas thy life
Has subdued to my spear, and the heap'd-up debt thou shalt pay
For all the comrades of mine thou didst slay in thy rage.'

So spake he and brandish'd and hurl'd his long-shadow'd spear,
But glorious Hector avoided it, watching its flight,
And crouch'd to the ground, and the spear far over him flew
And stuck in the earth. But Athena, snatching it up,
Gave it back to Achilles, of Hector unseen;
Then Hector the blameless son of Peleus address'd:

'Thou hast miss'd me, nor yet, O Achilles peer of the Gods,
Know'st thou my death-day from Zeus, tho' such was thy boast;
Glib talker thou provest thyself and a trickster in speech,
Hoping thy words might rob me of valour and strength.
But not in a fugitive's back thy spear shalt thou plant.
Nay, drive it straight through the breast confronting thee here
If God so favour thee. Now do thou watch in thy turn
For my spear, would that in thee it might bury itself!
Then war indeed for the Trojans should easier be
If Achilles were dead; for verily thou art our bane.'
So spake he and brandish'd and hurl'd his long-shadow'd spear,
And it smote on the shield of Achilles full in the midst
But rebounded far from the shield, and Hector was wroth
That his swift javelin had flown in vain from his hand,
And downcast he stood, for no second weapon he had.
Then, shouting, he call'd for a spear to Dēiphobus
His white-shielded brother, but he was nowhere at hand,
And Hector, knowing the truth, thus spake to himself:
'Woe's me! surely the high Gods call me to death;
Methought that the hero Dēiphobus stood at my side
But hé is in Troy and Athena my wits has beguil'd.
Now therefore is death before me, it stands very near,
And escape there is none; such then was the will from of old
Of Zeus and his far-shooting son, who always till now
My helpers have been, but my Fate has found me at last.
Let me not then unprov'n or inglorious die
But in some great deed to be told hereafter by men.'

So Hector spake, and at once his keen-whetted sword
Heavy and huge, that hung at his side, he unsheath'd
And gather'd himself and swoop'd, as an eagle that soars
Mid the dusky clouds in the sky darts down to the plain
Some tender yeanling to seize or a cowering hare:
So Hector swoop'd as he brandish'd his keen-whetted sword.
And Achilles made at him, fill'd in his innermost heart
With a wild rage, and a covering made for his breast
With his daedal shield, and his glittering helmet he toss'd
Four-plated, and over it wav'd the plumelets of gold
That the Fire-god along the ridges thickly had set.
As one star shines o'er the rest in the twilight at eve,
Hesperus, brightest of all in the heavens that shine,
So flash'd there a light from Achilles' keen-pointed spear
As he pois'd it at Hector, devising evil for him
And eagerly scanning his body an opening to find.
All else was cover'd from sight by the harness of bronze

That from mighty Patroclus he stripp'd when he slew him in fight,
But, just where the collar-bone parts the shoulders and neck,
Was a chink o'er the gullet, where life most quickly is spilt:
There did godlike Achilles let drive with his spear
And straight through the delicate neck the point of it went
Yet clave not the windpipe wholly, tho' weighted with bronze,
And words of answer Hector could speak to his foe;
And he fell in the dust, and Achilles vauntingly cried:
'Hector, thou thoughtest, when spoiling Patroclus of arms,
That safe thou shouldst be, and didst nothing reck of his friend,
Fond fool! for I his avenger, a mightier far,
By the hollow ships, undream'd of, waited behind,
Who now have loosen'd thy knees; thee vultures and dogs
Shall hideously rend but Patroclus his funeral shall have.'
And Hector with labouring breath made answer and said:
'By thy life and thy knees and thy father and mother, I pray,
Leave me not for the dogs to devour by the ships,
But for ransom accept good store of bronze and of gold,
The gifts that my father and lady mother will bring,
And my body to Ilion send, that of funeral fire
The sons and daughters of Troy may give me my dues.'

And, louting upon him, swift-foot Achilles replied:
'Prate not to me, vile dog, of parents or knees;
Would that so surely the lust were strong in my heart
To carve and devour thee raw, for the wrongs thou hast done,
And 'tis sure that no one shall save thy head from the dogs,
Not even if tenfold and twentyfold ransom they bring
Here weighing it out, and as much shall promise again:
No! not though Dardanid Priam should bid them repay
Thy weight in gold, should thy lady mother avail
On a bed to lay thee and mourn for the son that she loves,
But vultures and dogs thy corpse shall devour to the bone.'
Then, dying, bright-plum'd Hector address'd him again:
'I know thee, and quickly foreboded that hope there was none
Thy purpose to change: of iron is surely thy heart!
Take heed lest the wrath of the Gods I bring on thy head
In the day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo shall stand
In the Scaean gateway to slay thee, so brave as thou art.'
He spake, and the end that is death o'ershadow'd his eyes
And his soul flew forth from his limbs and to Hades was gone
Lamenting her lot and regretting manhood and youth.
But ev'n in his death Pelides address'd him again:
'Now die, for my fate I accept when the Father may will,
And all the other Immortals, to bring it to pass.'

So spake he and drew from the corpse his bronze-headed spear
And laid it aside, and stripp'd from his shoulders the arms
Blood-spatter'd, and other Achaeans gather'd around
And on Hector's stature and marvellous comeliness gaz'd;
Nor was any that pass'd beside him but added a wound,
And thus, as he look'd at his neighbour, would many a one say:
'Go to then! Hector is gentler to handle as now
Then when the devouring fire on our vessels he hurl'd.'
So would one speak and wound him, as by him he stood.
But when swift-foot godlike Achilles his armour had stripp'd,
He stood in their midst and winged words to them spake:
'Friends, captains, and counsellors all that in Argos have power,
Seeing that the Gods have granted to vanquish the man
That to us more evil has wrought than the rest of them all,
Come, let us now of their gates make trial in arms
The Trojans' purpose to probe, that we straightway may know
Whether Ilion they now will abandon, their champion slain,
Or are minded still to defend it tho' Hector is dead.
But wherefore thus does my spirit debate with herself?
There lies by the ships unwept, unburied, the dead,
Patroclus my comrade; him will I never forget
While still 'mong the living I bide and my limbs are astir:
What though in the house of Hades their dead they forget,
So will not I, but e'en there will remember my friend.
Come then, return we homeward, ye sons of Achaea,
Singing our paeon as Hector we bear to the ships:
We have won great glory and godlike Hector have slain,
To whom through their city the Trojans pray'd as a God.'

He spake and for Hector foul entreatment devis'd:
The tendons of both his feet he slit with a knife
From the heel to the ankle, and thrusting through them a thong,
Bound him behind his chariot to trail in the dust,
Then, mounting his car and lifting the armour therein,
Laid lash to his horses, and nothing loath did they fly;
And a dust-cloud rose where he trail'd, and his dark hair flew
Dishevell'd, and all his head, so graceful of old,
Was dragg'd in the dust, for Cronion had giv'n to his foes
In his native country to wreak their fury on him.
Befoul'd was that noble head; and, beholding her son,
His mother pluck'd at her hair and far from her cast
Her shining wimple and utter'd a terrible wail,
And piteously moan'd his father, and round them the folk
In the streets of the city ceas'd not from wailing and moan.
So wild was the cry, it seem'd as if Ilion's homes

And her beetling towers were utterly burning with fire:
Scarce could his people the old man, chafing, restrain
From rushing without through the great Dardanian gate,
And he cast himself in the dust and grovelling in mire
Imploring them all and calling by name upon each:
'Dear friends, release me, and leave me, tho' sore be your hearts,
To get me forth from the city, alone, to the ships
And there entreat this accursed and violent man
If haply for very shame he may pity my years;
For Achilles too has a father, old as am I,
Peleus, who rear'd him a bane for the Trojans to be
And chiefly for me, for to me most grief he has brought,
So many of my sons he has slain in the flower of their age.
Yet for all my mourning I grieve for them less than for one,
One only, my Hector, bitter sorrow for whom
To Hades will bring me. Would he had died in my hands!
Then had we sated our sorrow with wailing and moan,
We two ill-fated, the mother that bore him and I.'

Weeping he spake, and his people wail'd in accord.
And Hecuba led the lament for the women of Troy:
'Woe's me, my son, for how shall I live in my pain
Now thou art dead that in Troy wert ever my boast
Night and day? For to all a blessing thou wert,
To the sons and daughters of Troy, who hail'd as a God
Their Hector, for truly a glory thou wert to them all
While yet thou wert living; but Death and Fate have thee now.'

Weeping she spake, but Andromache knew not as yet
That Hector was dead, for no sure tidings had come
That her husband had tarried without and the battle abode:
Weaving she sat, in an inner chamber retir'd,
Broidering with beautiful flowers a gorgeous robe,
And she call'd to her fair-hair'd handmaidens, bidding them set
On the fire their largest cauldron that Hector might have
Warm washings when out of the battle home he return'd,
Fond heart! and knew not that far from all washings he was,
Slain at the hand of Achilles by grey-eyed Athena.
But she heard the shrieks and the wailing that came from the
tower,

And her limbs reel'd, and the shuttle dropp'd from her hand,
And again she spake to her maidens with piteous voice:
'Come, two of you! Go we and see what deeds are afoot;
'Tis the voice of our mother I hear, and my quivering heart
Leaps to my mouth and my knees beneath me are numb'd.
Some evil surely on Priam's children is come;

Far be the word from my ear, yet I terribly dread
Lest godlike Achilles have cut off Hector alone
From the gates of the town and have chas'd him again to the plain
And ended for once and for all his spirit of pride
That still possess'd him, for never he stay'd in the ranks
But ran to the front, in hardihood yielding to none.'

So saying with bursting heart through the chambers she sped
Like one distraught, and beside her the handmaidens went,
And when to the turret she came where the citizens throng'd
She stood on the wall and gaz'd and of Hector was ware
Being dragg'd by fleet-footed horses, in front of the walls,
Recklessly dragg'd at their heels towards the Danaan ships,
And black night fell on her eyes, o'ershadowing her,
And backward she sank and gasp'd her spirit away.
And from off her head was shaken the radiant attire,
The frontlet of gold and the coif and the well-plaited band
And the wimpled veil that the golden Goddess of Love
Gave her the day that Hector had brought her, a bride,
From her father's house, having paid for her measureless gifts.
Then round her there gather'd and stood her sisters-in-law
Whorais'd her, swooning, among them and stay'd her from death,
And, soon as the breath and the spirit return'd to her breast,
Wailing she lifted her voice 'mong the women of Troy:
'Woe's me, my Hector! To one fate then we were born,
In Ilion thou in the palace of Priam the King,
And I in Theba 'neath wooded Placos my home
In Eëtion's house, who nurtur'd me yet but a child,
Like him ill-fated; would I had never been born!
And now to the house of the dead, deep down under earth,
Thou goest, and I to a bitter mourning am left,
A widow at home, and thy son is yet but a babe,
Whom surely we bore to our sorrow, never to be
A blessing to thee, nor thou, O Hector, to him.
Evil things must he suffer, of father bereft,
Astyanax—'tis the surname they give him in Troy,
Since only thou hast defended their gates and their walls;
But now by the high-beak'd ships and far from thy kin
Worms shall devour thee, when dogs have glutted themselves,
Where naked thou liest: yet raiment in plenty thou hast
Wrought by the fingers of women, costly and fine,
All which with destroying fire I will burn for thee now,
No profit to thee, since thou wearest it not on the pyre,
But an honour 'twill be from the sons and daughters of Troy.'
Weeping she spake, and the women wail'd in accord.

Achilles gives Patroclus his funeral and holds games in his honour.

So made they moan through the streets: but the Danaan host,
 Soon as they came to the ships and the Hellespont shore,
 Scatter'd and went their ways, each man to his ship;
 But Achilles let not the Myrmidons scatter as yet
 But detain'd them, and thus to his war-loving comrades he spake:

'Ye swift-hors'd Myrmidon braves, true comrades of mine,
 Not yet let us loose our horses from under the yoke
 But draw we anigh, with our horses yok'd in their cars,
 To mourn for Patroclus; for such are the dues of the dead.
 And whenso of grievous wailing our fill we have had,
 Then loose we our horses and here make ready our meal.'
 And Achilles led the lament, and they wail'd in accord:
 Thrice round the body their sleek-coated horses they drove
 Grieving, and Thetis stirr'd them to wailing and moan;
 Wet were the sands and wet was the armour of men
 With tears, so mighty a master of battle they mourn'd.
 And among them Pelëides began the lament,
 Laying on the breast of his comrade his man-slaying hands:
 'Hail! O Patroclus, ev'n in the house of the dead,
 All that I promis'd to thee lo! now I fulfil,
 That Hector's corpse I should give to the dogs to devour
 And in front of thy pyre twelve captive youths I should slay,
 The noblest scions of Troy, in my anger for thee.'

So spake he and foul entreatment for Hector devis'd
 Stretching him prone, by the bier of Menoetius' son,
 In the dust; and the others their gleaming armour of bronze
 Put off and their high-neighing horses loos'd from the yoke
 And numberless sate by the vessel of swift-foot Achilles
 While hé made ready the bounteous funeral feast:
 Many a sleek-skinn'd ox did he slay with the steel
 And many a bleating goat and many a sheep,
 And many a white-tooth'd porker, dripping with fat,
 Was spitted, to singe in Hephaestus' fiery flame,
 And copious stream'd their blood round the corpse of the dead.

But him, the fleet-footed hero Pelēides,
The Danaan princes led to Atrides the King,
Hardly consenting, so wroth for his comrade he was;
And King Agamemnon, soon as they came to his hut,
Straightway order'd the clear-voic'd heralds to set
A cauldron over the fire, in hope to persuade
Pelides to wash from his body the stains and the blood.
But he straitly denied them and sware moreover an oath:
'Now swear I by Zeus, the highest and best of the Gods,
It fits not that washings of water should come near my head
Ere Patroclus I lay on the fire and build him a tomb
And my hair shave off, since no second sorrow like this
Can visit my heart while amongst the living I move.
Now feast we, obeying hunger's importunate call,
But to-morrow at dawn, Agamemnon Ruler of men,
Bid fetch for us wood and furnish us all that is meet
For a dead man to have when under the darkness he goes,
That weariless fire may burn him from out of our sight
Right soon, and our people betake them again to their tasks.'

So spake he, and gladly they listen'd to him and obey'd
And eagerly each made ready his supper and ate,
And their hearts were stinted in naught of the generous feast;
But, when they had sated desire both of meat and of drink
Then scatter'd they each to his hut to lay them to rest.
But Pelēides on the sands of the loud-breaking sea
Lay, heavily groaning, with many a Myrmidon round,
In a clear space, where the breakers roll'd to the beach:
There slumber possess'd him, lulling the cares of his heart,
Sleep soft-mantling, for tir'd were his glorious knees
With chasing of Hector by windy Ilion's walls;
And the spirit of hapless Patroclus visited him
In all things like him, his stature and beautiful eyes
And voice, and his very garments the same as in life;
And he stood o'er Achilles' head and a word to him spake:
'Thou sleepest, Achilles, and me thou rememberest not;
Living, thou lovedst me, dead, I am out of thy mind.
Come bury me quickly that Hades' gates I may pass,
For the spirits banish me far, the shades of the dead,
Nor allow me beyond the River to mingle with them,
And vainly I roam o'er the wide-gated house of the dead.
Give me thy hand to weep on, for never again,
My funeral fires once lit, from the grave shall I come;
Never shall we, from our comrades sitting apart,
Take counsel together, for fate has swallow'd me up,

The loathly doom ordain'd for me even from birth,
And thou thyself, O Achilles peer of the Gods,
'Neath the walls of the wealthful Trojans art destin'd to die.
One more thing will I charge thee, refuse it me not,
That thou lay not my bones, Pelides, apart from thy own
But together with thine, as together we grew in your halls
When my father from Opöis brought me, still but a child,
To Phthia thy home, for a grievous man-slaying curs'd
On that ill-starr'd day when I slew Amphídamas' son
Unwitting, in childish wrath, when we quarrell'd at dice:
Then took me the knight thy father into his house,
Old Peleus, and nurtur'd me kindly and nam'd me thy squire.
Now therefore for both our remains one urn let there be,
The gift of thy mother, the two-handled vessel of gold.'

And him did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Wherefore, my brother, comest thou hither to me
And layest these charges upon me? All will I do
Ev'n as thou say'st, and will all thy bidding obey.
Come to me; stand thou nearer and let us embrace
One moment, and take our pleasure in woeful lament.'
So spake Pelides and, reaching forth with his arms,
Embrac'd but the air, for the spirit had vanish'd like smoke
With a cry like a bat's, and Achilles leapt in amaze
Clapping his hands, and a word of pity he spake:
'Out on it! still there survives in the world of the dead
A spirit, a phantom, albeit the life-blood is out,
For all night long has the spirit of hapless Patroclus
Stood o'er me wailing and moaning and giv'n me his charge
What things I shall do; and his very image it seem'd.'

So spake he and woke in them all the desire to lament,
And rose-finger'd Dawn shone forth on them shedding their tears
Round the piteous corpse; and King Agamemnon at once
Chose men from every company timber to fetch
With mules, and a man of valour as overseer sent,
Meriones, that was squire to Idomeneus;
And forth they went with their tree-felling axes in hand
And ropes well-twisted, driving before them the mules;
And uphill and downhill and sideways and crossways they
rang'd.

But when to the spurs of fountainous Ida they came,
Straightway the leaf-crown'd oaks they lustily smote
With long-edg'd axes of bronze, and the trees with a crash
Fell, and the Danaans, cutting the trunks into lengths,
Chain'd them to mules, that tore up the earth with their feet

As they haul'd and made for the plain through the underwood
thick,

And the axe-men were laden with logs, obeying the word
Of Meriones that was henchman to Idomeneus;
And they laid them in rows on the beach where Pelëides
A mighty tomb for Patroclus design'd and himself.
And soon as the wood they had laid both this way and that,
Then sate they them down in their companies, waiting the word,
And straightway Achilles the war-loving Myrmidons bade
Gird on their armour and every man to his car
The horses to yoke. And, rising, they did on their arms
And mounted their cars, both fighters and charioteers;
In front were the horsemen, behind were the footmen in hosts,
Countless, and, borne by his comrades, the dead in their midst.
Then shearing themselves, they heap'd all his body with hair,
And godlike Achilles, holding his head from behind,
Mourn'd, for a noble comrade he sent to his grave.

And when they were come to the spot that Achilles had bid,
Down they set him and piled for him plenteous wood,
But swift-foot godlike Achilles bethought him again:
Standing away from the pyre he shore off a lock,
The golden lock that he nourish'd for Spercheius' stream,
And, troubled, he spake as he gaz'd o'er the violet sea:
'Spercheius, in other wise did my father to thee
Vow that, the day I return'd to Phthia my home,
This lock I should cut, and offer a hecatomb meet,
And fifty rams I should sacrifice over the springs
Of thy stream, where thy precinct and spice-scented altar are set.
So vow'd he, praying, but thou hast fulfill'd not his prayer;
And now, since no more to my own dear land I return,
This dedicate lock to the hero Patroclus I give.'
So spake he and laid in the hand of his comrade belov'd
The lovelock, and stirr'd in them all the desire to lament;
And now had the light of the sun gone down on their grief,
But Achilles spake to Atrides, as by him he stood:
'Atrides, seeing that the people to thee above all
Will hearken, and easy it is to be sated with grief,
Disperse them now from the burning and bid them prepare
Their meal, and we others to whom most dear is the dead
Will care for his fun'ral; but bid thou the princes remain.'

And the King of men, Agamemnon, hearing his speech,
Straightway the host dispers'd to the well-timber'd ships,
But the mourners, tarrying, pil'd up the wood of the pyre.
A hundred feet did they build it this way and that

And the dead man laid on the pyre, sore grieving at heart,
And sheep full many and crook-horn'd oxen they flay'd
And dress'd by the side of the pyre, and Pélëides,
Stripping the fat from them all, envelop'd the corpse
From the head to the feet, and the carcasses round it arrang'd;
And jars he set by the dead of honey and wine
Propp'd on the sides of the bier, and, groaning aloud,
Speedily four strong horses he cast on the pyre.
Nine dogs Patroclus in life at his table had fed,
And two of the nine he slaughter'd and flung on the pyre;
And he slew with his brazen sword twelve valiant sons
Of the great-hearted Trojans, devising evil for them,
And the fire's invincible strength to devour them he set
And, moaning aloud, on his comrade call'd by his name:
'Patroclus, even in Hades, hail to thee still!
All that I promis'd erewhile, lo! now is fulfill'd:
Twelve valiant sons of the Trojans I give to the fire
To feed on, with thee; but Priam's glorious son,
Hector, thy slayer, not fire but the dogs shall devour.'
So threaten'd he Hector, but dogs molested him not,
For day and night Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus,
Warded them off and smear'd him with roseate oil
Ambrosial, keeping his body from bruising or scar,
And over him Phoebus Apollo drew to the earth
A steel-blue cloud from the heavens, o'ershadowing the space
Whereon was his corpse, lest meanwhile the strength of the sun
Should shrivel the tissue of flesh on his sinews and limbs.

But still the pyre of Patroclus began not to burn,
And swift-foot godlike Achilles bethought him again:
Standing away from the pyre, he pray'd to the Winds
Of the North and the West and promis'd them offerings fair
And pour'd libations of wine from a chalice of gold
And besought them to come, that the corpses might speedily burn
And the wood make haste to enkindle. And hearing his prayer,
Iris at once to the Winds with his message was gone:
They all in the house of blustering Zephyr were met
Feasting, and Iris sped and alighted and stood
On the threshold of stone, and, seeing her stand at the door,
Each of them rose and besought her to sit by his side.
But Iris refus'd to be seated, and thus to them spake:
'No sitting for me: I must hasten to Ocean again,
To the Ethiops' land, where they sacrifice hecatombs meet
To the deathless Gods, that I miss not my share in the feast.
But Achilles is praying the North and the shrill-blowing West

To come to his help, and he promises offerings fair,
That the funeral pyre ye may kindle whereon he has laid
His comrade Patroclus whom all the Achaeans bemoan.'

She spake and was gone; and the two obey'd and arose
With a rush and a roar, and, rolling before them the clouds
Swiftly o'ersea came blowing, and under their breath
The waves swell'd high, till to deep-loam'd Troyland they came
And fell on the pile and awaken'd the crackling of fire;
All night long did they blow on the flame of the pyre
With their shrill blasts, and all night long did Achilles
Draw wine from a golden bowl in a two-handled cup
And pour on the ground libations, drenching the earth,
As he call'd on the spirit of hapless Patroclus his friend.
As a father mourns when he burns the bones of a son
New-wedded, whose death to his desolate parents is woe,
So mourn'd Pelides, burning Patroclus's bones,
As he wearily pac'd round the pyre with many a groan.

At the hour when the Day-star heralds the light o'er the earth
Ere ever the bright-mantled Dawn makes golden the sea,
Then languish'd the smouldering fire and the flame died down,
And the two strong Winds to their homes betook them again
O'er the Thracian main, and it heav'd and moan'd as they went.
And Peléides from the burning turn'd him away
And lay down wearied, and sweet Sleep leapt upon him,
But when, round King Agamemnon, the princes approach'd,
The noise and the tramp of their coming brake on his sleep,
And, awakening, upright he sat and a word to them spake:
'Atrides and all ye others, chiefs of Achaea,
First extinguish the ashes with bright-hearted wine
Far as the onset of fire has reach'd them, and then
Collect we the bones of Patroclus, Menoetius' son,
Singling them well, and easy they are to discern,
For he lay in the midst of the pyre, while the others apart
Confusedly burn'd on the edge, both horses and men;
And the bones in a golden urn, enfolded with fat,
Let us stow till the day I be hidden in Hades myself.
And no huge barrow I bid you raise o'er the pyre,
Just seemly, no more: but hereafter, ye Danaan men,
Build it both broad and high, whichsoever of you,
When I am departed, are left in the well-timber'd ships.'

So spake he, and swift-foot Achilles they straightway obey'd:
First with bright-hearted wine they extinguish'd the fire
Far as the flame had reach'd in the smouldering ash,
Then, weeping, the whiten'd bones of gentle Patroclus

In a golden urn they collected, enfolded with fat,
And stow'd in the huts and wrapp'd it in fine-woven lawn.
Next mark'd they a circle and laid foundations of stone
Round the pyre, and within it they heap'd a barrow of earth,
And homeward then would have turn'd, but Achilles the host
Bade stay in their places and made them sit in a ring
And prizes brought from the ships: bright cauldrons and tripods
And horses and mules and great-limb'd oxen he brought,
And fair-girdled women and hoar-grey iron in ore.

And first for fleet-footed horses a glorious prize
He set in their midst, a woman in handiwork skill'd
And a two-handled tripod whose measure was twenty and two;
These for the first; for the second, an unbroken mare
Six years old, with a mule-foal still in her womb.
A cauldron he set for the third, four measures it held,
Untarnish'd by fire and white as when first it was made;
For the fourth in the race two talents of gold were the prize,
And a two-handled urn for the fifth, that fire had not touch'd.
And upright he stood and a word to the Danaans spake:
'Atrides, and all ye others, Achaeans in arms,
Behold ye the prizes awaiting the charioteers.
If now in another's honour the contest had been,
Then surely the foremost prize I had claim'd for myself,
For ye know how my horses in breed all others excel;
Immortal they are, and Poseidon gave them of old
To Peleus my father, and he in turn to his son.
But I and my whole-hoov'd horses shall rest for to-day,
So great is the loss of their glorious charioteer
And the gentle hand that their manes so often has wash'd
In clear spring-water and dress'd them with sweet-smelling oil:
Now stand they and mourn for Patroclus, bowing their heads
And trailing their manes on the ground, with grief in their
hearts.

But ye other Achaeans, get to your places at once,
Whosoe'er in his horses and well-fram'd chariot has trust.'

He spake and the chariot-racers assembled with speed;
First a Ruler of men, Eumelus, arose,
Admetus's son, in horse-craft excelling them all,
And Tydeus' son, the valiant Diomed, next,
With a team of the breed of Tros, that he captur'd in fight
On a day when Apollo their lord Aeneas had sav'd;
And Atrides was third, fair-hair'd Menelaus the King,
Heav'n-born, and he yok'd to his chariot a fleet-footed team,
Podargus, his own, and Aethe, his brother's, a mare;

Her Echeolus to King Agamemnon had giv'n
In fee, that to windy Troy he might follow him not
But take his pleasure at home, for measureless wealth
From Zeus he had got where in wide-lawn'd Sicyon he dwelt,
And now Menelaus yok'd her, impatient to run.
And, fourth, Antilochus harness'd his sleek-coated team,
The glorious son of Nestor the high-hearted King
That was Neleus' son; of Pylian breed was the team
That his chariot drew, and his father came to his side
And gave sage counsel to him, tho' wise in himself:
'Antilochus, young as thou art, thou hast ever been dear
To Zeus and Poseidon who taught thee all kinds of skill
With horses, and little it needs to teach thee again.
Thou know'st how to turn at the posts, but thy horses are slow
In running, and sorry labour for thee it will be;
The others' horses are swifter, but nevertheless
Of all their drivers not one is so crafty as thou.
Come, dear boy, thou must all thy cunning recall
And keep it in mind, lest the prize escape thee at last;
'Tis by cunning rather than force that a woodman excels,
By cunning a helmsman must steer his swift-going ship
On the wine-dark sea, when shaken by buffeting winds,
By cunning a charioteer his rival o'ertakes.
This man, trusting his horses and chariot alone,
Heedlessly wheels at the turning, too wide of the post,
And his horses swerve from the course since he holds them
not in:

Another is shrewder, tho' slower his horses may be,
And fixes his eye on the mark and turns by it close,
And, once his course he has set and tighten'd the reins,
Holds on unswerving and watches the driver in front.
Now will I tell thee an unmistakable sign:
A fathom's height above ground a stump thou wilt see
Leafless, an oak-tree or pine, unrotted by rain,
And two white stones are on either side of it set
Where the two tracks meet, and around smooth driving there is;
'Tis either the tomb of a man that long has been dead
Or by heroes of old it was set as the goal in a race,
And now 'tis the mark by godlike Achilles decreed.
Do thou bear close on the mark with thy horses and car
And thyself in thy wicker'd chariot lean to the left
But only a little, and call on the horse on the right
With voice and with lash, and give him the rein with thy hand,
And see that the near horse hug so closely the post

That the nave of the well-wrought wheel in passing may seem
To graze it, yet take good heed that thou touch not the stone,
Lest the horses thou wound and the chariot utterly wreck;
A triumph were that for the rest, a reproach to thyself.
Nay, dear boy, be thou wary and well on thy guard;
For if at the turning-post thou canst drive by the rest,
Thereafter shall no one o'ertake thee, however he spurt,
Not though the peerless Arion he drove in pursuit,
Adrastus's fleet-footed stallion, the seed of a God,
Or Laomedon's horses, the best that in Troyland were bred.'

So spake Nelëian Nestor and sate him again
In his place, having told to his son the sum of it all.
And Meriones was the fifth his horses to yoke;
And straightway they mounted their chariots and cast in the
lots,

And Achilles shook and the lot of Antilochus
Leapt forth, and the lord Eumelus was next after him,
And the third Menelaus Atrides, fam'd with the spear,
And the fourth was Meriones, and last of them came
Tydides, the best of them all, for his place on the track.
Their stations they took, and Achilles show'd them the mark
Far out o'er the flats of the plain, and beside it he plac'd
Godlike Phoenix, a squire of his father's, as judge
To watch the chariots' running and truly report.

Then each at a signal rais'd o'er his horses the whip
And smote with the reins and call'd on the horses with words
Right eager, and swiftly they stepp'd o'er the limitless plain
Leaving the ships, and the thick dust under their chests
Like a cloud or a whirlwind arose as together they rac'd,
And their manes wav'd, being blown by the breath of the wind.
And the swift-drawn chariots at times ran touching the earth
And at times would bound in the air, and the charioteers
Upright stood in the cars, and the hearts in their breasts
With hopes of victory beat, and each on his team
Eagerly call'd as they flew through the dust of the plain.

But when in their running the furthest limit they reach'd
And turn'd towards the hoar-grey sea, then clearly was seen
The prowess of each as the horses lengthen'd their stride;
For Eumelus' fleet-footed horses shot to the front
And next to him Diomed's flying stallions ran
Of the breed of Tros, but hardly a handbreadth behind,
For ever it seem'd they would mount Eumelus's car,
And his back and his broad shoulders were warm with their
breath,

So closely they bent o'er his body, flying at speed.
And then had the son of Tydeus his rival outstripp'd
Or a dead-heat made it, if Phoebus Apollo in wrath
The shining whip had not smitten from out of his hand;
And Diomed's eyes with tears of anger were fill'd
When he saw that the mares in front were gaining on him
And his own, for lack of the goad, thrown out of the race.
But Athena had mark'd that Apollo had trick'd him, and sped
And swiftly o'ertook Tydides, shepherd of men,
And gave him his whip and his horses with spirit endued;
Then after Admetus' son in her anger she went
And brake the yoke of his chariot, and straightway the mares
Swerv'd from the track, and the pole fell twisted to earth
And the driver was hurl'd from his car by the side of the wheel,
And the skin from his elbows was flay'd and his nostrils and
mouth,
And his forehead was bruise'd o'er the brows, and tears in his
eyes

Brimm'd and his lusty voice of its utterance fail'd.
And Tydides his whole-hoov'd horses drove to the side
And darted ahead, for the grey-eyed Goddess his team
With strength had endued and the glory giv'n to himself.

And now fair-hair'd Menelaus was second to him,
But at once on his father's steeds Antilochus call'd:
'Step out, and your every muscle strain to the full;
I bid you not strive with those that are first in the race,
The horses of wise Tydides whom grey-eyed Athena
Has bless'd with swiftness and glory giv'n to himself,
But o'ertake Menelaus's horses nor lag ye behind;
Show now your speed, lest Aethe, a mare tho' she be,
Pour scorn on your running: why lag ye, my excellent steeds?
Mark now my words, and they surely accomplish'd shall be:
Ye will find no tendance with Nestor, shepherd of men,
Hereafter, but straightway shall die by the edge of the sword,
If by faint-hearted running the worser prize we shall win.
Have after them then and strain ye your uttermost speed,
And myself a plan will devise and occasion will watch
In the narrowest place to o'ertake them. Trust ye to me!'
He spake, and the horses, fearing their master's rebuke,
Ran faster awhile, and presently Antilochus
The narrows espied in a sunken part of the track:
A rift there was in the earth, where a torrent in flood
Had broken the surface and hollow'd the neighbouring ground,
And warily drove Menelaus, avoiding a clash,

But Antilochus, turning his horses a little aside
And out of the track, bore down on him, drawing abreast;
And in terror Atrides shouted to Antilochus:
'Thou art mad, Antilochus, hold thy horses in check;
The road is o'er-narrow to pass, 'twill be wider anon,
But here thou wilt foul my chariot and both of us wreck.'

So spake he, but still more fiercely Antilochus drove,
Plying the goad, as though he had heard not at all.
Far as a discus, swung from the shoulder, is cast
When a young man lustily hurls it, trying his strength,
They rac'd each other, but then Menelaus's team
Fell back, for he ceas'd of himself to urge them to speed
Lest the whole-hoov'd horses should clash in the perilous place
And the wicker'd chariots o'erturn and the drivers themselves
Be tumbled in dust, o'er-eager for victory's prize.
And thus Menelaus, upbraiding, shouted to him:
'Antilochus, surely a master of mischief thou art;
Beshrew thee! we spake not the truth in calling thee wise.
Yet still no prize shalt thou win, unchalleng'd by me.'
So saying, Atrides call'd on his horses again:
'Hold ye not back nor slacken, tho' sore be your hearts;
The feet and knees of his pair far sooner than yours
Will weary, for long are they past the vigour of youth.'
He spake, and the horses, fearing their master's rebuke,
Sprang forward and close to Antilochus quickly had drawn.

But meanwhile, sitting in concourse, the Danaans watch'd
As the horses in clouds of dust came flying for home,
And the first that a chariot mark'd was Idomeneus
Where he sat in a place of vantage, clear of the ring;
Far in the distance the shout of a driver he heard
And was ware of a horse, conspicuous, striding in front,
All the rest of him chestnut, but showing full clear
A white blaze on his forehead, round as the moon,
And upright he stood and a word to the Danaans spake:
'Friends, captains, and counsellors all that in Argos have power,
Is it I only that see them, or see ye them too?
Methinks 'tis another pair that has taken the lead
With another charioteer, and the horses that led
On the outward journey have come to grief on the plain.
Eumelus's mares, that I saw first rounding the mark,
Now can I nowhere see tho' I search with my eyes
Hither and thither, ranging the Ilia plain.
Perchance 'twas the charioteer that, dropping the reins,
Check'd not his team by the goal and fail'd at the turn

And doubtless was thrown, and his chariot utterly wreck'd,
While the horses stray'd from the course in their wildness of
heart.

But stand ye up in your places and see for yourselves:
I discern not clearly as yet, but the leader to me
Aetolian Diomed seems, that rules o'er his folk
In Argos city, of horse-taming Tydeus the son.'

Then answer'd him Ajax Æleus with scurrilous speech:
'Idomeneus, ever the braggart, far from us yet
The high-stepping mares go coursing over the plain.
Thou art not so far the youngest of those that are chiefs,
Nor thy eyes so far the keenliest look from thy head,
Yet ever thy talk runs on: it little beseems
A braggart to be, for here there are better than thou.
Still are leading the horses that led from the first,
Eumelus's mares, and he stands with the reins in the car.'
And to him did the Cretan chieftain in anger reply:
'Ajax, in railing our master, in everything else
Of little account 'mong the Argives, so churlish thou art!
Come, let us wager between us a cauldron or tripod,
And Atreus' son, Agamemnon, our umpire shall be
Which horses are first, that so thou mayst learn at thy cost.'
So spake he, and straightway Ajax Æleus arose
With angrier speeches to answer Idomeneus,
And yet more bitter between them the strife would have wax'd,
But Achilles, rising himself, thus spake to them both:
'No longer with rancorous speeches answer each other
But forbear, ye heroes, for ill words little beseem:
Yourselves any other would blame, if the like he should do.
Sit ye still in the concourse, keeping your eyes
On the cars and the drivers, for soon they will be at the goal
Striving for victory, and then shall each of you know
As touching the Argives' horses, which follow, which lead.'

So spake he, and Diomed soon drew near on the track:
Ever he lifted his lash from his shoulder and smote
The high-stepping horses, swiftly fulfilling their course,
And ever the sprinklings of dust on the charioteer
Beat, and the car, inlaid with gold and with tin,
Ran smooth, at the heels of the horses, and faint were the prints
Scor'd by the tires of the wheels, as the chariot slid
O'er the fine dust: so swiftly the stallions flew.
And he pull'd up his car in the ring, and plenteous sweat
From the stallions' manes and their shoulders pour'd to the
ground;

And himself from the shining chariot leapt to the ground,
And lean'd his whip on the yoke. And quickly his squire
Enter'd the ring and the first prize carried away
And gave to his proud companions the woman in charge
And the two-handled tripod, and loos'd the team from the yoke.

And second the wise Antilochus drove to the post
Who by craft, not swiftness, brave Menelaus had pass'd;
Yet even so Menelaus was close upon him,
Close as a horse to the wheel when his master he draws
In a chariot, straining at uttermost speed o'er the plain,
And the tips of the hairs on his tail are touching the tire,
For the wheel runs ever anigh with scarcely a space
'Twixt horse and the tire, as he speeds far over the plain:
So close Menelaus to blameless Antilochus
Came, tho' at first by the cast of a discus behind,
And quickly was catching him up, for the mettle of Aethe,
Agamemnon's sleek-coated mare, was rising in her
And, if further by ever so little the race had been run
No doubt had there been, but Atrides had pass'd him with ease.
Next Meriones, stout squire of Idomeneus,
A spear-cast behind Menelaus finished the course,
For his sleek-coated pair were the slowest by far of them all
And himself the feeblest to drive in a chariot-race;
And last there appear'd Admetus's son in the ring
Dragging his chariot and driving his horses in front,
And swift-foot godlike Achilles had pity on him
And stood in their midst and winged words to them spake:
'Last comes with his whole-hoov'd horses the best man of all:
Come let us give him a prize, as seemly it is,
The second prize, for the first shall Diomed keep.'

So spake he, and all the assembly applauded the word,
And the mare he had giv'n him, since all of them shouted assent,
But the son of great-hearted Nestor, Antilochus,
Arose and replied to Achilles, pleading his rights:
'Pelides, wroth shall I be if thy word thou fulfil:
Thou art minded to take my guerdon and give it to him
Because his fleet-footed horses miscarried forsooth
And himself, good man tho' he be; yet he ought to have pray'd
To the Gods immortal, and then he had never been last.
If thou pitiest him, and if dear he is to thy heart,
Thou hast treasure of gold in thy hut and treasure of bronze,
And sheep and handmaids and whole-hoov'd horses thou hast:
Give him hereafter a costlier prize, if thou choose,
Or even at once if thou lovest the people's applause,

But the mare I never shall yield; let any that will
Stand forth and essay at my hands the battle for her.'
So spake he, and swift-foot godlike Achilles was pleas'd
And smil'd, for a comrade belov'd was Antilochus,
And straightway in winged words made answer to him:
'If thou biddest me, friend, with another gift from my store
To reward Eumelus, that also I gladly will do.
The corslet of bronze that from Asteropaeus I took,
Whereon is a casting of brilliant tin overlaid,
He shall have for a gift, and a worthy prize it will be.'
So spake he and bade his companion, Automedon,
To bring it forth from the hut, and he brought it at once,
And noble Eumelus receiv'd it with joy at his hands.

Next rose up Menelaus griev'd in his heart,
With Antilochus anger'd sore, and the herald a staff
Plac'd in his hand and for silence call'd in the ring;
And among them spake Menelaus, peer of the Gods:
'Antilochus, once so wise, what a deed hast thou done!
Thou hast sham'd my prowess and brought my horses to grief,
Thrusting thy own in front tho' the feebler they were.
But come, ye captains and chiefs that in Argos have power,
Give judgment between us, tho' favouring neither of us,
Lest one of the mail-clad Achaeans hereafter may say:
"Menelaus by lying reports has his rival o'erborne
And taken the prize, tho' his horses were feebler by far,
Because by his sovereign rank he is stronger than he."
Hear now the claim that I plead, and methinks that ye all
In this will support me, for fair the trial shall be:
Come, Antilochus, stand thou forth, as is meet,
Before thy horses and chariot, and take in thy hand
The tapering whip wherewith thou didst drive in the race
And, touching the horses, swear by the Earth-shaking God
That thou didst not wittingly hinder my chariot by guile.'
And him did the wise Antilochus answer again:
'Bear with me now, O Atrides, for younger I am
Than thou art by far, and my elder and better art thou;
Well thou knowest whence come the offences of youth,
How hasty our temper may be, our judgment how weak.
Suffer me then in thy heart, and myself will restore
The mare I have taken: nay, but if further thou ask
Some greater gift from my house, I will give it at once
Rather than fall from my place, till the end of my days,
In thy heart, O foster'd of Zeus, and sin against Heaven.'

So spake he, the son of great-hearted Nestor, and gave

The mare to Atrides' hands, and the heart of the King
Was melted and gladden'd, as when on the ripening ears
The dewfall descends, in fields that are bristling with corn:
So was the heart of the King made glad in his breast
And he lifted his voice and in winged words to him spake:
'Antilochus, now will I all my anger forgo
Against thee, since nowise flighty thou wontest to be
Nor light in thy mind, but youth has thy reason o'erborne.
Be loath hereafter to trick thy betters by guile;
For none of the other Achaeans my wrath had appeas'd,
But seeing that so much thou hast suffer'd and labour'd for me,
Thou and thy father and brother, and help'd me at need,
Therefore I yield to thy prayer, and even the prize
Will give thee albeit my own, that these others may know
That no o'erweening implacable spirit is mine.'

Therewith to Nöemon, the comrade of Antilochus,
He gave up the mare, and the cauldron kept for himself,
And Meriones took up the talents of gold
For the fourth prize: but the fifth untaken remain'd,
The two-handled urn, which Achilles bore through the ring
And to Nestor gave it, and spake as he stood at his side:
'Lo now, this will I give thee, an heirloom to be
And to keep Patroclus in memory, for never again
Shalt thou see him among the Achaeans. I give thee a prize
Unwon, for in boxing or wrestling no more canst thou strive
Nor throw in the javelin-match nor race with thy feet,
For grim old age already is heavy on thee.'
So spake he and gave him the cup, and he took it with joy
And, uttering his voice, in winged words to him spake:
'Truly, my son, all this thou hast spoken aright:
No longer my limbs are stedfast, my feet, nor my hands
That straight from my shoulders so lightly would shoot to
their mark.

Would I were young and my force unspent as of old
When King Amarynceus was buried at Buprasion
And funeral games in his honour were held by his sons:
There not a man was my match of the Elian folk
Or the Pylians themselves or the proud Aetolian men;
In boxing I beat Clytomedes, of Enops the son,
Ancaeus of Pleuron in wrestling I lightly o'erthrew,
And a right good man, Iphiclus, in running o'ercame,
And both Polydorus and Phyles out-threw with the spear,
And the sons of Actor alone in the chariot-race
Beat me, two against one, to victory spurr'd

Because the best of the prizes was yet to be won:
Twin brothers they were, and the one their chariot drove,
Always drove, while the other one wielded the whip.
Such was I then, but to-day let younger than I
Take part in these feats, for to burdensome age I must bend
Who then was a man and with heroes shone in the ring.
But 'tis meet that Patroclus also be honour'd with games
And the gift I accept full gladly, my heart is rejoic'd
That thou still rememberest our friendship, true as of old,
And the honour among the Achaeans due to my years;
And may all the Gods for thy kindness be gracious to thee.'

So spake he, and down the concourse Achilles was gone
Having heard to the end old Nestor's speeches of thanks.
Then prizes for violent boxing he set in their midst;
For the victor he tether'd a sturdy mule in the ring,
Six years old, unbroken, the hardest to break,
And beside her a two-handled cup for the loser he set
And, upright standing, a word to the Danaans spake:
'Atrides and all ye others, Achaeans in arms,
For these I shall bid two champions, two of the best,
To put up their hands and fight, and to whomso the God
Shall victory grant, if all ye Achaeans approve,
The sturdy mule he shall take to his hut for a prize
And the loser shall solace himself with the two-handled cup.'
He spake, and there rose among them, brawny and huge,
Well skill'd in boxing, Epëius, Pánopeus' son,
Who, laying his hand on the mule, thus vaunted himself:
'Come someone and take if he will this two-handled cup,
But the mule no other Achaean shall claim as his prize
In a match with the fists, for I boast me the best of them all.
Suffices it not that the palm in battle I yield
Since 'tis given to no one in every art to excel?
For this will I say, and it surely accomplish'd shall be:
Who meets me, his flesh will I bruise and his bones will I break,
And his seconds had better remain not far from his side
To carry him forth from the ring, when vanquish'd by me.'

So spake he, and all the assembly in silence were hush'd,
And only Euryalus rose, a peer of the Gods,
Son of a King, Mekisteus Taläus' son
Who journey'd to Thebes, in the days when Oedipus fell,
For his funeral rites and the sons of Cadmus o'ercame.
Him did spear-fam'd Diomed gird for the fight,
And cheer'd him with words, for his victory he greatly desired;
And first his girdle he fasten'd, and then on his hands

Gauntlets of well-cut hide from an ox of the field.
So they, being girt, stood forth in the midst of the ring
Fronting each other, and, lifting their sinewy hands,
Fell to with their weighted gauntlets and mingled their blows,
And dread was the grinding of teeth and from every limb
Stream'd plenteous sweat; but Epëius rush'd on his man
As he peer'd for an opening, and smote him a blow on the cheek,
A staggering blow, and no more he could stand on his legs:
As when 'neath a ripple a fish on a weed-tangled beach
Floundering leaps, and the black wave hides him again,
E'en so Euryalus leapt, but Epëius at once
Rais'd him again, and his comrades gather'd around
And led him with tottering footsteps out of the ring,
Spewing his blood and sideways lolling his head.
There 'mong his friends they seated him, daz'd in his wits,
And themselves went back to the ring for the two-handled cup.

And a third contest, for wrestling, Achilles proclaim'd,
A heart-straining labour, and prizes he set in the midst,
For the winner, a mighty tripod to stand o'er the fire,
Priz'd by the noble Achaeans at twelve oxen's worth,
For the loser a captive woman he set in the ring,
Skill'd in manifold arts, four oxen her price,
And upright he stood and a word to the Danaans spake:
'Stand forth any two that the wrestling contest essay.'
He spake, and at once Telamonian Ajax arose
And wary Odysseus beside him, a master of craft,
And the two, being girt, stood forth in the midst of the ring
And clasp'd each other in arms with their sinewy hands
Like the rafters design'd by a builder, propping the roof
On a lofty gable, to baffle the force of the winds;
And their backs creak'd with the tug and strain of their hands,
So firmly they gripp'd, and the sweat pour'd down them in
streams,

And many a livid weal on their shoulders and ribs
Brake out, purple with blood, and ever the two
For victory strove and the well-wrought tripod of bronze.
But neither Odysseus could trip and bear to the ground
Ajax, nor Ajax Odysseus, so stubborn his strength;
And when the Achaeans began to weary of them,
Then great Telamonian Ajax his rival address'd:
'Heav'n-born son of Læertes, wily Odysseus,
Lift or be lifted, and Zeus shall the issue decide.'
So lifted he him, but the other forgat not his craft
But smote from behind on his knee-joint and loosen'd his limbs

And threw him aback and fell upon Ajax's chest,
And all the other Achaeans marvell'd and gaz'd.
Then godlike Odysseus in turn would have lifted his man—
Ever so little he mov'd him yet lifted him not
But gave him a hook on the knee, and together they fell
Beside each other and lay there bemir'd with the dust.
And a third time they had risen to wrestle again,
But Achilles himself restrain'd them, and thus did he speak:
'Strive ye no more nor wear yourselves painfully out.
Victors are both: take equal prizes and go
That the other Achaeans also may share in the games.'
So spake he, and they right willingly heard and obey'd
And wip'd off the dust and put on their doublets again.

Next ordain'd he the prizes for fleetness of foot,
A wine-bowl of silver, emboss'd, six measures it held,
In beauty surpassing by far all others on earth,
For craftsmen of Sidon had made it and cunningly chas'd,
And over the misty sea Phoenicians had brought it
And to Thōas giv'n as a gift, when they landed at Troy:
'Twas the bowl that the hero Patroclus receiv'd as the price
From the son of Jason to free Lycaon from bonds,
And Achilles made it a prize to honour his friend
For whoso in fleetness of foot should be first in the race;
And an ox, well-fatted and huge, for the second he set
And a half-talent of gold as a prize for the last,
And upright he stood and a word to the Danaans spake:
'Stand forth whosoever the running-match will essay.'
So spake he, and straightway Ajax Ōileus arose
And wily Odysseus and, after them, Antilochus,
Nestor's son, 'mong the youths the swiftest of foot;
And they ran full speed from the start, and Ajax at once
Led them, but godlike Odysseus close on him press'd:
As close as the weaving-rod to the breast of a woman
Fair-girdled, when deftly towards her she pulls it by hand
Drawing the spool through the warp, and close to her breast
She holds it, so close was Odysseus, who trod from behind
In Ajax's footsteps ere ever could settle the dust,
And the breath of godlike Odysseus was warm on his head
As he ran, and all the Achaeans roar'd their applause
As he strain'd for victory, and call'd on him, labouring hard.

But ev'n as they finish'd the course and were nearing the
mark,
Odysseus to grey-eyed Athena pray'd in his heart:
'Hear me, O Goddess, a helper be to my feet.'

So pray'd he, and Pallas Athena her suppliant heard
And lightness gave to his limbs, both his feet and his hands,
And then, as they darted forward to stretch for the prize,
Ajax slipp'd in his running, by Pallas o'erthrown,
Just where the offal was strewn of the bellowing bulls
That swift-foot Achilles had slaughter'd to honour his friend,
And his mouth and his nostrils were fill'd with the offal of bulls.
So fell to godlike Odysseus, winning the race,
The Sidonian bowl, and to glorious Ajax the bull,
And he stood there holding the horn of the bull with his hands
And, sputtering the filth, a word to the Danaans spake:
'Ay me! 'twas the Goddess that tripp'd me, who still as of old
Like a mother stands by Odysseus and helps him at need.'
He spake, and they pleasantly laugh'd his trouble to see.
And the other prize Antilochus took from the ring
With a smile for them all, and thus the Achaeans address'd:
'Friends, ye will bear me witness that even in this
'Tis the elder man that the Gods immortal support.
Ajax indeed is but little older than I,
But here is a man that belongs to an earlier day;
His is a green old age, and hard would it be
For any to match him in speed save Achilles alone.'
So spake he honouring swift-footed Pelëides,
And him did Achilles straightway in answer address:
'Not vainly, my friend, shall my praise have been spoken by
thee:

Lo now! a gold half-talent I add to the first.'
So spake he and gave him the present, rejoicing his heart.
And Achilles set in the midst a long-shadow'd spear
And a cauldron that knew not the fire, the worth of an ox,
With flowers emboss'd, and the spearmen stood in the ring,
Atrides, the King of men, Agamemnon himself,
And Meriones, brave squire of Idomeneus;
But swift-foot godlike Achilles address'd them and said:
'Atrides, we know how far thou excellest us all
And how far thou art best in the strength of thy cast with a
spear;

Do thou then the cauldron take to the ships as thy prize
And the spear let us give to the hero Meriones,
If so thou art willing: for such my judgment would be.'
So spake he, and King Agamemnon bow'd his assent;
And, yielding to Meriones the bronze-headed spear,
He gave Talthylus charge of the goodlier prize.

Priam enters the Greek camp to ransom his son from Achilles, and bringing him home to Troy gives him his funeral.

THE ring was broken, and all the host, in their tribes,
Scattering return'd to the ships, and bethought them
with joy

Of supper and sweet sleep after. Achilles alone,
Remembering his comrade, wept, nor ever could Sleep,
All-mastering Sleep, lay hold on him; restless he toss'd,
Mourning the might and the manhood of noble Patroclus,
Brooding o'er all they had done and endured together,
The battles of men and the bitter waves of the deep.
Remembering all, with many a heavy tear,
Oft he turn'd on his side, and often he lay
Prone or supine, and anon would rise to his feet
And, roaming in frenzied grief by the sands of the sea,
Watch for the dawn to redden o'er billow and beach.
Then would he yoke to his chariot fleet-footed horses
And, trailing Hector behind him, drive o'er the plain,
Till, thrice having rounded the tomb of Menoetius' son,
He rested again in his hut, but Hector he left
Stretch'd on his face in the dust; yet Apollo was nigh
And let not disfigurement mar the delicate flesh,
But, pitying him ev'n in death, with his ægis of gold
Cover'd him o'er, and kept him from bruising or scar.

Still on godlike Hector his fury he wreak'd;
But the blessed gods beholding had pity on him
And urged the Far-seer, Hermes, to steal him away.
So seem'd it good to the rest, but not to the three,
Hera and Lord Poseidon and grey-eyed Athena,
For these their hate as of old against Ilion nurs'd
And Priam and Priam's people for Paris's sin
Who flouted those goddesses both, when they came to his fold,
And prais'd for her deathly gift the Goddess of Love.
Twelve days now were accomplish'd since Hector was slain,
When Phoebus Apollo thus the Immortals address'd;
'Ye are hard, aye cruel, ye Gods; has Hector not burn'd
Meats unblemish'd for you of bulls and of goats?

And now ye would grudge to rescue even his corpse
That his wife and mother and child upon him might look,
And his father Priam and all his people, who then
Would quickly consume him with fire and his funeral make.
But his felon foe ye Gods are fain to abet,
That murderous man who knows not reason or right
In his ruthless breast, as a lion savage at heart
That indulges his lusty strength and spirit of pride
And falls upon oxen or sheep to make him a meal:
E'en so has Achilles cast out pity and shame.
Yet many a man that has lost a dearer than he,
An own brother perchance or the son that he lov'd,
Having mourn'd for a season, has made an end of his grief;
For the Fates have given to mortals a heart to endure.
But he, having reft the godlike Hector of life,
Drags him behind his chariot, fie on the deed!
As round the tomb of his comrade he drives o'er the plain.
Let him beware, tho' brave, lest our wrath be on him
When senseless clay he insults in his furious rage.'

And him did white-arm'd Hera in anger address:
'Such might thy words be, O Lord of the silver bow,
Were ye minded to honour Achilles and Hector alike,
Hector a mortal, who suck'd at the breast of a woman,
Achilles the seed of a goddess—I nurs'd her myself
And to womanhood rear'd and gave her a husband to wed,
Peles, a man to Immortals dear above all:
Ye were guests at their bridals, ye Gods, and Apollo himself,
Faithless, ill-friended, gladden'd the feast with his lyre.'
And her did the Cloud-compeller in answer address:
'O Hera, be not too hard in thy quarrel with us:
They shall not be equal in honour, tho' Hector alive
Was dearest to us of the men that in Ilion dwell,
Most surely to me, for he fail'd not in gifts that I love:
Never lack'd on my altar the generous feast,
Libation or sacrifice either, the dues of the Gods.
But speak we no more of stealing Hector away
Unknown to Achilles; for verily that may not be
When daily and nightly his mother stands at his side.
But pray now, one of you Gods go call her to us
That a weighty word she may hear and Achilles persuade
To accept from Priam a ransom for Hector's release.'

So spake he, and wind-shod Iris sped on the errand,
And midway 'twixt Samos and rock-bound Imbros she plunged .
To the main, and the waters, rounding, clos'd o'er her feet.

Straight to the deep sea-floor like a plummet she dived
That weights a fisherman's line when his spinner he casts
Carrying death to the ravenous fishes below.
Now Thetis she found in her hollow cave, and around
Were seated the sea-nymphs all and she in their midst
Bemoan'd the fate of blameless Achilles her son,
Doom'd far from his country in deep-loam'd Troyland to die.
And Iris standing before her address'd her and said:
'Arise, Thetis, 'tis Zeus in his wisdom that calls.'
And Thetis, the silvery-footed, answer'd and said:
'What means then the Dread One's summons? I shrink to
approach

The deathless Gods for the griefs that I nurse in my heart.
But I come; let him utter his word, not vain shall it be.'

So speaking the Lady Thetis chose her a robe
Of duskiest hue, was never raiment so black,
And forth she started, with fleet-footed Iris before
Leading the way, and the surges divided for them.
Shoreward they clomb, then soar'd and shot to the heav'n
And found the all-seeing Father and round him the rest
Of the blessed Gods immortal seated together;
And Thetis sat by his side, for Athena made room,
And Hera a golden goblet plac'd in her hands
With welcoming words, and she drank and return'd her the cup.
And the Father of Gods and men to address them began:
'Thou art come to Olympus, O Goddess, tho' troubled at heart
With grief unceasing and care: I know it myself,
Yet even so will I say why I summon'd thee hither.
Nine days long have the Gods been at strife with themselves
O'er Hector's corpse and Achilles sacker of towns;
For some there be that the Far-seer Hermes would urge
To steal him away, but I to Achilles herein
The glory accord, for my love and homage to thee.
Go now with speed to thy son and tell him my will,
Say that the Gods are angry, and I above all
The Immortals am wroth, because in his furious rage
Hector he holds, unransom'd still, at the ships,
That so he may fear me perchance and Hector release.
And to great-hearted Priam Iris too will I send
To bid him go to the ships and ransom his son
Carrying gifts for Achilles to gladden his heart.'

So spake he, and Thetis the silvery-footed obey'd
And down from the peaks of Olympus darted her way
Till she came to the hut of her son and found him within

Loudly bemoaning himself; and his comrades were there
Busily making ready the morning repast
And a shaggy ram fresh-slaughter'd lay on the floor.
But his goddess-mother sat by the side of her son
And strok'd him with gentle hand and address'd him and said:
'My child, how long with lamentation and woe
Thy heart wilt thou eat, forgetful of food and of sleep,
When even a woman's embrace were a comfort to thee?
Not long shall I see thee alive, for close at thy side
Death and imperious Fate are watching for thee.
But hark to my words, for from Zeus a message I bring:
He says that the Gods are angry, and He above all
The Immortals is wroth, because in thy furious rage
Hector thou hold'st, unransom'd still, at the ships.
Come now, release him, and take thy price for the dead.'
And her did swift-foot Achilles in answer address:
'Let someone bring me the price and take him away,
If thus with his heart's intent the Olympian wills.'
So they, in the ships' assemblage, mother and son,
With many a winged word each other address'd.

But Zeus bade Iris to holy Ilion go:
'Away, fleet Iris, leave the Olympian seat
And a message bear to great-hearted Priam in Troy
To go to the ships and ransom Hector his son
Carrying gifts for Achilles to gladden his heart—
But alone: let none of the Trojans accompany him
Save only some ancient herald to follow behind
With mules and a high-wheel'd wagon, whereon he may bring
The dead man slain by Achilles back to his home.
Of death let him take no thought, nor anything fear,
Such convoy do we assure him, the slayer of Argus,
To lead him until at Achilles' door he be set;
For, once he has enter'd his hut, will Achilles forbear
With his own hand to slay him, and others restrain.
No witless madman is he, no monster of sin,
But with carefullest heed he will spare a suppliant man.'
So spake he, and wind-shod Iris sped on the errand
To Priam's palace, and found there crying and moan:
In the courtyard around their father were seated his sons
Soiling their raiment with tears, and he in their midst,
Closely wrapp'd in his cloak, was crouch'd on the earth,
His hoary head and his shoulders cover'd with filth
That his hands had scrap'd from the ground, as he grovell'd
thereon.

And within the palace his daughters and daughters-in-law
Made moan, remembering the many valiant dead
That in battle had lost their lives at the Danaans' hands.
But Iris approach'd with her message and Priam address'd,
Speaking low, and a trembling seiz'd on his limbs:
'Courage, O son of Dardanus! Be not afraid;
I come not as boding evil to visit thee here
But with kindly intent: from Zeus is the message I bring,
Who cares for thee, far tho' he be, and has pity on thee.
The Olympian bids thee go and ransom thy son
Carrying gifts for Achilles to gladden his heart,
But alone: let none of the Trojans accompany thee.
Save only some ancient herald to follow behind
With mules and a high-wheel'd wagon, whereon he may bring
The dead man slain by Achilles back to his home.
Of death shalt thou take no thought, nor anything fear,
Such convoy does he assure thee, the slayer of Argus,
To lead thee until at Achilles' door thou be set;
For, once thou hast enter'd his hut, will Achilles forbear
With his own hand to slay thee, and others restrain.
No witless madman is he, no monster of sin,
But with carefullest heed he will spare a suppliant man.'

Thus having spoken, fleet-footed Iris was gone;
And Priam arose and summon'd his sons to prepare
The mule-drawn wagon and bind a basket thereon,
And himself went down to a chamber (fragrant it was
With cedar, and lofty, and many a treasure it held)
And Hecuba call'd he within and a word to her spake:
'Lady, there came a messenger hither from Zeus,
To bid me go to the ships and ransom our son,
Carrying gifts for Achilles to gladden his heart.
Come now, tell me thy thought, how seems it to thee?
For myself, the desire in my soul is wondrously strong
To go to the ships and enter the Danaan camp.'
So spake he, and Hecuba, groaning, answer'd and said:
'Woe's me! whither is fled thy wisdom of old
That abroad and among thy people made thee a name?
How canst thou enter the Danaan leaguer alone
And look in the eyes of the man that so many has slain
Of thy valiant sons? Thy heart is surely of iron!
Let him but light on thee there or his eyes on thee set,
That savage and faithless man no pity will feel,
No reverence pay thee. In absence mourn we our son
Sitting at home, and leave him, as tyrannous Fate

Spun the thread of his life on the day he was born,
Far from his parents to glut the ravin of dogs
In the power of a violent man on whose innermost heart
Fain would I fasten and feed, that the quittance he pay
For Hector's life, for in him no craven he slew
But one that the sons and deep-bosom'd daughters of Troy
Champion'd, with never a thought of shelter or flight.'
And the old man, godlike Priam, address'd her again:
'Curb not my eagerness, nor be thou a bird
Of evil omen at home: thou movest me not.
Were this the command of a mortal born of the earth,
Some seer it may be, or entrail-watcher, or priest,
A lying voice I might deem it, and deaf to it be;
But now, since the very speech of the Goddess I heard
And look'd in her eyes, I go, that her word be not void.
If death indeed be my fate at the Danaan ships,
So would I have it! Achilles that instant may slay
When my son I have clasp'd in my arms and sated my grief.'

So spake he and went to his coffers and, opening the lids,
Took, of his treasures therein, twelve beautiful robes,
Twelve mantles of single fold and coverlets twelve
And of snow-white rugs as many and doublets besides:
And of precious gold having weigh'd ten talents in all,
Two gleaming tripods and four great cauldrons he chose
And a goblet of marvellous beauty that Thracians had giv'n
him.

When he went on an embassy thither, a chattel of price—
E'en that did the old man spare not, so eager he was
To ransom his son. And with bitter words of abuse
Drove he the Trojans forth from the long colonnade:
'Out on you, worthless wretches, a blot on our name!
Have ye no mourning at home that ye trouble me here?
Or seems it but little that Zeus has giv'n me this grief,
The death of the best of my sons? Ye shall know it yourselves,
For easier far shall ye be for Achaeans to spoil
Now godlike Hector is dead. But, as for myself,
Before I see with mine eyes the city of Troy
Ravag'd and sack'd, to Hades' house may I go!'

Then chas'd he them off with his staff, and out of the court
They fled at his threats; and he call'd to each of his sons
Chiding them, Helenus, Paris, and Agathon fair,
Antiphonus, Pammon, Polites stalwart in fight,
Deiphobus, Hippothöus, and Dius the proud,—
Nine did the old man name and bid to his side:

'Haste ye now, do-nothing sons, to your father a shame!
Would that in Hector's stead ye had died at the ships!
Woe's me, unblest, who begat the noblest of sons
In Troyland wide and of none can I say that he lives,
Godlike Mestor, and Tröilus driver of horses,
And Hector, a god among men, since never he seem'd
Offspring of mortal man but the son of a god.
These has Ares destroy'd, and the rest are my shame,
Lying tongues, light-heel'd, the heroes of dance,
Robbers of sheep and of goats from their countrymen's herds.
Come, busy yourselves, and quickly the wagon prepare
And stow in it all that is here, that my journey may speed.'
So spake he, and they, afraid at their father's rebuke,
Drew forth the high-wheel'd mule-cart out of the stall,
A new-made wagon, and bound the basket thereon;
And then they took from its peg a yoke for the mules,
A boxwood yoke with a knob and guides for the reins,
And a yoke-thong brought they therewith, nine cubits in length,
And skilfully fitted the yoke on the well-polish'd pole
At its outermost end, and slipp'd the ring o'er the pin,
And lash'd it to with the band, thrice coiling it round
And belaying behind that the tongue might turn underneath.
Last, bringing out of the chamber the measureless price
For Hector's head, on the polish'd wagon they heap'd it
And harness'd the strong-hoov'd mules, the glorious gift
That the Mysians once on a day to Priam had given:
But horses they yok'd to the chariot, two of the breed
That Priam rear'd in his stable for none but himself.

But they meanwhile in the palace were girding themselves,
The herald and Priam, and deep were the thoughts in their
breasts,

When Hecuba, troubled in mind, appear'd at their side
Bringing them honey'd wine in a goblet of gold
Wherewith libation to pour ere they went on their way;
And, standing before the horses, to Priam she spake:
'Lo now, offer to Zeus libation, and pray
For a safe return from thy foes, since still thy desire
Even in my despite on the journey is set.
Pray thou then to Cronion, the God of the storm
On Ida thron'd, who surveys all Troyland beneath,
Ask for a bird of omen, his messenger swift,
The bird that he loves most dearly, the strongest that is,
To appear on thy right, that, seeing the sign with thy eyes,
In trust thereon thou mayst go to the Danaan ships.

But if all-seeing Zeus vouchsafe not the omen to thee,
Then I at least would in no wise urge thee to go,
How eager soever thou be, to the Danaan ships.'
And her did godlike Priam in answer address:
'Dear wife, thou counsell'est well, I will heed thee in this:
'Tis good that we lift up our hands for pity to Zeus.'
He spake, and commanded a serving-woman to draw
Spring-water to pour on his hands, and she at the word
A bowl and a pitcher of water brought to his side;
And then, having wash'd, he receiv'd the cup from his wife
And, standing midmost the court, libation he made
And, with eyes uplifted, utter'd his prayer to the God:
'O Father on Ida thron'd, most glorious and great,
Grant that Achilles be kind to me under his roof,
And send thou a bird of omen, thy messenger swift,
The bird that thou lov'st most dearly, the strongest that is,
To appear on my right, that, seeing the sign with my eyes,
In trust thereon I may go to the Danaan ships.'
So spake he praying, and Zeus wise-counselling heard
And an eagle, surest of omens, sent him at once,
The dusk-hued hunter, Blackwing call'd among men:
Wide as the spacious door of a banqueting hall
Wrought for a rich man's house, well-locking and close,
So widely his pinions spread. On the right he appear'd
Winging over the city, and seeing the sign
They rejoic'd, and their hearts within them were gladden'd
with hope.

Then quickly the old man mounted the chariot step
And out of the courtyard and echoing portico drove:
In front was the four-wheel'd wagon drawn by the mules,
With wise Idaeus for driver, behind was the car
Which the old man drove through the city, plying his lash
The horses to speed, and his kinsmen follow'd the car
Loudly lamenting as tho' he were bound to his death.
But soon as the town they had left and were come to the plain,
To Ilion then did the others straightway return,
His sons and his sons-in-law, but far-seeing Zeus
Mark'd those two on the plain and had pity on Priam,
And, turning to Hermes his son, he address'd him and said:
'Hermes, since thou above all the Immortals dost love
To companion men, and thou hearest whomso thou wilt,
Rise now and go, and Priam escort to the ships:
So guide him that none may see him or know of him there
Of all in the Danaan host till Achilles he reach.'

He spake, and the Messenger, slayer of Argus, obey'd;
Straightway under his feet his sandals he bound,
Ambrosial gold, that swift as the breath of the wind
Bear him o'er boundless earth and the watery main;
And taking his wand, wherewith the eyelids of men
He lulls when he will and again from slumber awakes,
The strong-wing'd slayer of Argus flew on his way,
And quickly to Troyland came by the Hellespont shore.
There alighting he walk'd, in the guise of a prince
At the springtime of youth when the down first shows on the
chin.

But the herald and Priam, when once they had pass'd on
the plain

The barrow of Ilus, halted the horses and mules
To drink at the river, for darkness had spread o'er the earth,
When lo! Idaeus that moment the stranger espied
A little away and to Priam utter'd his voice:
'Now mark me, master, 'tis wary going we need,
For here is a man, who will speedily rend us, methinks:
Shall we take to the chariot and fly, or touching his knees
Entreat for our lives, if so he may pity and spare?'
He spake, and the old man's heart was molten with fear
And his hair stood up and bristled on every limb,
And rooted he stood, in amaze, till the Helper approach'd
And, taking the old man's hand, address'd him and said:
'Whither, old father, drivest thou horses and mules
Through the awful gloom of the night when men are asleep?
Fearest thou not the Achaeans, whose breath is as fire,
Ruthless foemen so near thee on every hand?
If one should espy thee afoot thro' the blackness of night
With treasures like these, what thought, what counsel were
thine?

Thou art young no longer thyself, thy attendant is old,
Yourselves to defend if any should quarrel with you;
But I will injure thee not but from harm against all
Will protect, for my father's likeness I see in thy face.'
And to him did the old man, godlike Priam, reply:
'E'en so, dear son, are all these things as thou say'st,
Yet a god full surely his hand has stretch'd o'er my head
That he sends to me one such as thou to meet by the way,
An omen of luck, so noble in feature thou art,
So wise in thy heart, and thy parents so blessed in thee.'
And the Messenger, slayer of Argus, address'd him again:
'Yea, old father, in all thou speakest aright;

But come now, tell me I pray, and say but the truth,
 Whether so goodly a treasure thou takest abroad
 'Mong alien men, that there it may safely be kept,
 Or all of you now from sacred Ilion flee
 Abandoning hope, so surely your best ye have lost
 In Hector thy son, for of fight no niggard was he.'
 And to him did the old man, godlike Priam, reply:
 'Who art thou then, gallant youth, and of whom wert thou born,
 That speakest so fair of the hapless fate of my son?'
 And the Messenger, slayer of Argus, address'd him again:
 'Thou art proving me, father, in asking of Hector thy son;
 Him of a surety often I saw with my eyes
 In glorious battle and once when he chas'd at the ships
 The routed Achaeans and slew with the edge of the sword
 And wé could but stand and gaze, for Achilles was then
 Wroth with Atrides the King and forbade us to fight.
 I am his squire, one vessel brought us o'ersea
 Myrmidons both, and my father Polycctor is nam'd,
 Wealthy in goods but an old man even as thou;
 Six other sons has my father, and I am the seventh,
 And when lots we cast, upon me did it fall to embark.
 Thou wonderest seeing me far from the ships on the plain,
 But at dawn round Troy the Achaeans their battle will set,
 For it chafes them sore to be sitting pent in the camp
 And the princes cannot restrain their fury for fight.'
 And to him did the old man, godlike Priam, reply:
 'If thou indeed art the squire of Pelëides,
 Come now, tell me I pray, and say but the truth,
 If my son is still at the ships or Achilles ere now
 Has piecemeal riv'n him and cast his limbs to the dogs.'
 And the Messenger, slayer of Argus, address'd him again:
 'Not yet, old sire, is he eaten by vultures or dogs,
 But still by Achilles' vessel yonder he lies
 Ev'n as he fell: 'tis the twelfth dawn now that he lies,
 But corruption has touch'd him not, nor worms on his corpse
 Feed, that are wont to batten on flesh of the slain;
 Achilles drags him indeed round the tomb of his friend
 In his reckless rage, each heavenly dawn that appears,
 Yet mars he him not: thou wouldst wonder to see him thyself
 How dewy-fresh he remains, all cleans'd of his blood
 And nowhere defil'd, and clos'd are the lips of his wounds
 Where'er he was pierc'd, for many a sword on him bit.
 Such care have the blessed Immortals for Hector thy son,
 Dead tho' he be, for they held him dear above all.'

So spake he, and Priam rejoic'd and a word to him said:
'My son, it is good that a man due offering pay
To Immortals, for never did Hector, so sure as he liv'd,
Forget in his house the Gods on Olympus that dwell;
Therefore they think of him now, tho' his portion is death.
But do thou accept at my hands this goblet of price
And protect me, an old man, and guide me, if Heaven be kind,
Till safe I arrive at the door of Pelëides.'
And the Messenger, slayer of Argus, address'd him again:
'Good sire, thou temptest my youth, yet persuadest me not
To accept a gift at thy hands, unknown to my chief;
'Afraid should I be of Achilles, o'er measure asham'd,
Defrauding him so, lest evil hereafter befall.
Yet even to far-fam'd Argos with thee would I go
Thy trusty and courteous guide, on ship or afoot,
And no man, slighting thy escort, should quarrel with thee.'

So spake the Helper and mounted the chariot step,
And quickly the lash and the reins he grasp'd in his hands
And breathed a spirit of fire in horses and mules.
But when to the towers they were come, by the trench of the
camp,
E'en then were the sentinels busy preparing their meal,
And Hermes a sudden slumber shed on them all;
So, pushing the bar back, he straightway open'd the gates
For Priam's car and the wain with the glorious gifts,
And soon at the hut of Pelëides they arriv'd,
The high-roof'd hut that the Myrmidons built for their chief
With pine-wood logs they had hewn and roof'd it above
With a thatch of the downy reed that they mow'd on the marsh,
And about it a spacious courtyard made for their chief
With a stout palisade, and the bar of the gate was a pine
That task'd three men to move it when bolting the gate
And three to draw it again, so bulky it was,
For only Achilles himself could move it alone.
But Hermes the Helper speedily open'd the gate
And brought in the splendid gifts for swift-foot Achilles;
And, stepping to ground from the chariot, thus did he speak:
'Old sire, thou beholdest in me no man but a God,
Hermes, whom Zeus my father for escort has sent;
But now must I straightway return lest Achilles his eyes
Set on me here, for cause of reproach would it be
That Immortal with mortals familiar converse should hold.
But go thou within, and, clasping his knees with thy hands,
By his father and bright-hair'd mother and well-lov'd son

Entreat him with prayer, that to pity his heart thou mayst move.'

So Hermes spake and to high Olympus was gone,
And Priam down from his chariot leapt to the ground
And left Idæus to watch o'er the horses and mules.
Then strode the old man doughtily straight to the house
Where Achilles was wonted to sit, and found him within
At his ease, withdrawn from his friends: two only were there,
Automedon brave and Alcimus scion of Ares,
Bustling and busy, for late he had ceas'd from his meal,
From eating and drinking, tho' still the table was set;
And Priam approach'd unseen, and bent at his feet
Embracing his knees, and kiss'd the terrible hands,
The murderous hands, that so many had slain of his sons.
As one by a haunting curse of man-slaying driv'n
Flees from his country and enters a rich man's hall
Among outland folk, and the company wonder to see him,
So wonder'd Achilles godlike Priam to see
And his comrades also in wonder gaz'd on each other.
But Priam with suppliant voice the hero address'd:
'Remember thy father, Achilles peer of the gods,
Old as am I, on the grievous pathway of age;
By evil neighbours perchance he is harried and vex'd
And none is beside him from baneful ruin to save,
Yet still, when he hears of Achilles alive among men,
His heart is rejoic'd and he sees each day in his dream
His belov'd son at his side, from Troyland return'd.
But I, I am all unblest, for tho' sons I begat
The noblest in Troy, yet of none can I say that he lives.
Fifty I had when first the Achæans arriv'd,
Nineteen royally mother'd, sons of my queen,
And the rest by concubine women born in my halls.
Now of most by furious Ares the knees were unstrung,
And one that was left me, the bulwark of city and folk,
Him thou slewest but now while fighting for Troy,
Hector, my pride. 'Tis for him that I come to the ships
To ransom him dead, and a price unmeasur'd I bring.
O Achilles, fear thou the gods, and have pity on me
Remembering thy father, for I am forlornier than he
And have dar'd, what none upon earth before me has dar'd,
To touch the lips of the man that my son's blood has shed.'

He spake, and Achilles was stirr'd for his father to weep
And, touching the old man, thrust him gently away;
And remembering their dead, the one for man-slaying Hector

Wept incontinent, crouch'd at the feet of his foe,
 And the other his father bewail'd and Patroclus at whiles,
 And the woeful cry of them both went up through the house;
 But soon as the noble Achilles had sated his grief,
 When yearning had spent itself in his breast and his limbs,
 He rose from his seat and the old man rais'd by the hand
 Pitying the hoary hairs on his head and his chin,
 And kindly with winged words address'd him and said:
 'Ah, hapless of men! what a bitter cup thou hast drain'd!
 How daredst thou uncompanion'd to visit the ships
 And look in the eyes of the man that slew of thy sons
 So many and brave? thy heart is surely of iron!
 But come now, take thou a seat, and sorrows we'll leave,
 For all the smart of our pain, to be quiet in us:
 A chilly comfort is mourning and profits us naught!
 This is the portion to piteous mortals assign'd
 By the careless Gods, to live in trouble and pain.
 For two urns stand on the floor in the palace of Zeus,
 Stor'd with the gifts he allots, both evil and good;
 For one man Zeus the Thunderer mingles his gifts,
 And he for his fortune has good, but evil as well;
 To another he metes but the evil and makes him a scorn
 Hounded by ravening hunger o'er bounteous earth,
 A waif unhonour'd of Gods and mortals alike.
 E'en so to Peleus the Gods immortal assign'd
 Glorious gifts from his birth, who all men excell'd
 In weal and in wealth and was King of the Myrmidon men,
 And though he was mortal they gave him a Goddess to wife:
 Yet his good with evil was mix'd, for never he knew
 The seed of a princely offspring rais'd in his halls
 But one son only begat, untimely to die,
 Who tends not his grey old age, since far from our home
 In Troyland I sit, a scourge to thee and to thine.
 And of thee, old King, it is told, thou wert happy at first:
 Far as Lesbos to southward bounds thy domain
 Or Phrygia northward and Helle's far-flowing stream,
 Thou wert the richest of all in treasure and sons;
 But now this trouble is come from the Heavenly ones,
 And battle and slaughter ever thy city beset.
 Yet learn to endure, nor ceaselessly grieve in thy heart:
 What shall avail thy lamenting for Hector thy son?
 Or how shalt thou raise him? Death must befall thee ere then.'
 And to him did the old man, godlike Priam, reply:
 'Bid me not yet to a seat, O foster'd of Zeus,

While Hector is lying untomb'd, but release him at once
That my eyes may behold him, and take for his ransom the gifts
That we bring for thee hither; and joy mayst thou have of
them all

And a safe home-coming, since once my life thou hast spared!'
Then, louting upon him, swift-foot Achilles replied:
'Chafe me no more, Old King; I am minded myself
Thy son to release, for from Zeus a messenger came,
My mother, the Ancient's daughter that shepherds the sea;
And of thee, O Priam, I know, tho' thou hidest the truth,
That a God was thy escort and guided thee safe to the ships.
No mortal surely, how lusty soever, would dare
That road to essay, for how, unseen, should he pass
The watch at the wall, or the bars unlock of our gates?
Therefore stir me no more, nor awaken my grief,
Lest haply I wrong thee, sire, e'en thee in my wrath
And a suppliant slay at my hearth and sin against Heaven.'

Sternly he spake, and the old man, fearing, obey'd;
But Achilles sprang like a lion and out at the door
Leapt, not alone, for his squires attended him still,
Automedon brave and Alcimus, two whom he lov'd
Of all his comrades the best, save Patroclus himself.
Now these unloos'd from the yoke the horses and mules
And brought Idaeus, the old man's crier, within
And set him a seat. Then out of the well-polish'd wain
The measureless ransom for Hector's head they remov'd;
But a fine-spun tunic and two of the mantles they left
To shroud the body when Hector homeward was borne.
And Achilles summon'd his women to wash and anoint him,
But first he bore him apart, lest Priam should see
And his anger not refrain for the grief in his heart
When he saw his son, and Achilles' wrath should be stirr'd
And he his suppliant slay and sin against Heaven.
But after the women had wash'd and anointed his limbs
And a fair-wrought mantle and tunic round him had wrapp'd,
Achilles lifted him up and laid on a bier
And his henchmen help'd him to raise it on to the wain.
But Achilles, groaning, call'd on his comrade by name:
'Be not aggriev'd, O Patroclus, if haply thou hear,
Ev'n in the house of Hades, that Hector I give
To his father dear, for a worthy ransom he brings
Whereof due share thou shalt have to make thee amends.'
So speaking godlike Achilles return'd to the hut
And sat on the carven settle from whence he had ris'n

By the opposite wall, and a word to Priam he spake:
'I have done as thou wouldst, old sire, thy son is releas'd
And lies on his bier, and soon with dawning of day
Thou shalt see him thyself. But now be of supper our care;
For bright-hair'd Niobe also remember'd to eat
Ev'n when her children twelve were kill'd in her halls.
Six sons, six daughters she had in the bloom of their youth,
But the sons by the silver shafts of Apollo were slain
And the daughters by Artemis, wroth for Niobe's pride,
Because with their lovely mother her name she had match'd:
For herself had born those many, and Leda but two.
Yet all of them, daughters and sons, by the two were destroy'd;
Nine days they lay in their blood, for the people by Zeus
Were turn'd into stones and none that could bury them liv'd,
But the tenth day the Immortals buried the twelve,
And Niobe, wearied with weeping, bethought her of meat.
And somewhere still on a lonely crag of the hills
Where they say that the nymphs of Sipylus couch them to rest
Who beside Achelöus' waters their dances entwine,
There sits she, a stone, and broods on her trouble to-day.
We also, godlike sire, will bethink us of meat,
And home to Ilion soon thy son thou shalt bring
And mourn him. Ah! many a tear for Hector must fall!'

So spake he and sprang to his feet, and a snow-white ram
Chose he and kill'd, and his comrades skinn'd it and dress'd
And skilfully carv'd it and pierc'd the collops on spits
And roasted with care and drew all off from the fire.
And then Automedon serv'd at a table the bread
In baskets trim, while Achilles portion'd the meats,
And they stretch'd their hands to the viands laid on the board.
But when they had sated desire of meat and of drink,
Dardanian Priam long at Achilles gaz'd
Admiring his stature and beauty and aspect divine,
And long did Achilles wonder at Dardanus' son
Studying his kinglike mien and hearing him speak.
And when to their hearts' content they had wonder'd and gaz'd,
First did the old man speak to Achilles a word:
'Spread me a couch right soon, O foster'd of Zeus,
Whereon I may rest and the sweets of slumber enjoy;
For never my weary eyelids have clos'd o'er my eyes
Since first my son at thy hand his spirit resign'd,
But I mourn unceasing and brood my numberless griefs,
Roaming my courtyard-close and rolling in mire.
Now too I have broken bread and drunk of the cup

Of bright-hearted wine, and have made of fasting an end.'

He spake, and Achilles summon'd the women and squires
To set two beds in the cloister and lay upon each
A bright-colour'd rug, and above it a coverlet spread,
And a woolly mantle o'er all, the sleeper to wrap;
And they came from the inner room with torches in hand
And busied them quickly and spread two couches in haste.
Then meaningly swift-foot Achilles the old man address'd:
'I shall lodge thee without, good sire, lest one of the chiefs
Should chance to visit me here and sit by my side
Hearing and tendering counsel, for such is their wont.
If one should see thee within thro' the blackness of night,
Straightway would King Agamemnon hear the report
And more than a night shouldst thou wait for Hector's release.
But come now, tell me with truth, as touching thy son,
How many days thou art minded his funeral to make
That so long I may rest and the host from battle restrain.'
And to him did the old man, godlike Priam, reply:
'If indeed thou art willing that Hector his funeral have,
This shalt thou do to pleasure me, gentle Achilles;
Thou know'st that in walls we are pent, and wood from the hills
Is far to fetch, and the Trojans are sorely afraid:
Nine days grant us for mourning Hector at home,
And a tenth for his burial-rite and the funeral feast,
And one thereafter to raise the barrow for him;
On the twelfth day we will fight, if fighting must be.'
And swift-foot godlike Achilles address'd him again:
'Take thou my word, old sire, it shall be as thou say'st:
Eleven day's space I will rest, as thou biddest me do.'

So spake he and caught the old man's hand at the wrist
To pledge him his word and cast all fear from his mind;
And the two at once in the portico laid them to rest,
The herald and Priam, with many a thought in their hearts,
But Achilles far retir'd in an innermost room
Lay, and the fair Briseïs slept by his side.
All night long did Gods and warfaring men
Repose unwaking, lapp'd in the bosom of sleep,
But the Luck-bringer Hermes never was holden of sleep,
Debating of Priam and how he should speed him again
Home from the ships, outwitting the watch at the wall,
And he bent to his pillow'd head and a word to him spake:
'Old father, thou reck'st not of evil, sleeping so sound
Among hostile men, since Achilles spared thee thy life.
Thou hast ransom'd thy son of a truth, and great was the price;

But for thee who livest the remnant left of thy seed
Should render a threefold payment to ransom thy life
If Atrides and all the Achaeans were ware of thee here.'
He spake, and the old man, fearing, his herald arous'd,
And Hermes yok'd for them quickly the horses and mules
And drove them himself thro' the camp, and none was aware;
But soon as they came to the ford of the fair-flowing river,
Eddying Xanthus whom Zeus Immortal begat,
Then Hermes straightway to high Olympus return'd
And gold-mantled Dawn her splendour shed o'er the earth.

On to the city they urged, with wailing and moan,
The car and the mule-drawn wain with the body thereon,
But Ilion's sons and daughters discover'd them not
Till Cassandra, fair as the golden Goddess of Love,
Ascending Pergamus' tower her father descried
Where he stood in the car, and the herald driving the wain,
And was ware of one in the wain outstretch'd on a bier.
Then shrilly she call'd and o'er all the city was heard:
'Come hither and look upon Hector, ye people of Troy!
As once ye hail'd him in life, from battle return'd,
With joy, who was ever the joy of our city and folk!'
Then none in Ilion stay'd, but women and men
All for grief unbearable rush'd to the gates
And, a little beyond, met Priam bringing the dead;
First bewail'd him his lov'd ones, mother and wife,
Casting themselves on the wain and rending their hair
As they touch'd his head, while the folk stood weeping around;
And so for a livelong day till setting of sun
Wailing for Hector before the gates they had stood,
But the old man call'd from his chariot, chiding the throng:
'Way for the mules to pass! and of shedding of tears
Ye shall have your fill hereafter, when home he is come.'
And the folk stood back and a passage gave to the wain.

But when they had enter'd the palace, Hector they laid
On a fretted bed, and seated the minstrels beside
To lead in the dirge; and they lifted the funeral song
While the women, wailing in chorus, waked for the dead.
And first did the fair Andromache lead the lament,
As the head of man-slaying Hector she clasp'd in her hands:
'Ah! husband of mine! how young from life thou art pass'd,
And thy wife thou leavest a widow, thy son but a babe,
Whom surely we bore to our sorrow, never to grow
To his manhood's prime: ere then shall Ilion's tower
Be utterly raz'd, for its sentinel Hector is fall'n,

Of its wives and innocent children ever the shield,
Who now in the ships must voyage, I with the rest;
And thou, my little one, either shalt go at my side
To where at a menial task thou must labour, the slave
Of a pitiless master, or someone will snatch thee away
And swift to a hideous death from the battlement hurl,
Wroth for a brother whom Hector in battle has slain
Or a father or son, for exceeding many of them
Under the hand of Hector have bitten the dust,
For no light hand had thy father in mischievous war;
Therefore his people throughout the city lament
And a grief that cannot be told to his parents he leaves
But chiefly to me, O Hector, the woe and the pain;
I held not thy hand in death, no greeting from thee
Nor precious word did I hear, to remember hereafter
And comfort me with, when daily and nightly I weep.

So spake she mourning, the women wail'd in accord;
And Hecuba lifted her voice to lead the lament:
'Hector, of all my children the dearest to me,
Truly, my son, in life thou wert dear to the Gods
And still they tend thee with care, tho' thy portion is death.
All the rest of my sons that swift-foot Achilles
Has captive taken, beyond the unharvested sea
In Samos or Imbros or smoking Lemnos he sold,
But thee, when the edge of his sword had reft thee of life,
Thrice in a day would he drag round the tomb of his friend
Whom thou slewest, Patroclus, yet e'en so rais'd he him not;
But now all dewy and fresh thou liest at home
Like one that Apollo, the Lord of the silver bow,
With his painless arrows has slain in a chamber of death.'

So spake she mourning and ceaseless wailing awoke,
And among them was Helen the third to lead the lament:
'Hector, of all my brethren the dearest to me,
For brother thou art, if Paris indeed is my spouse
Who to Troyland brought me—would that ere then I had died!
Of the fleeting years the twentieth now have I seen
Since first Lacedaemon, my own dear country, I left,
Yet never from thee one taunting word did I hear,
And if ever another upbraided of those in our house,
Brother or sister of thine or a sister-in-law
Or our mother (for Priam was ever a father to me),
Thou wert the peacemaker still restraining them all,
So kind was thy heart, so kind the word on thy lips.
With reason I mourn for thee now, yet more for myself

With pain in my soul, for none any longer is left
To befriend me in Troy, but all men shudder at me.'
So Helen mourn'd, and the multitude groan'd at her words.

Then spake to his people the old man Priam and said:
'Fetch wood to the city, ye Trojans, and be not afraid
Of deep-laid ambush: Achilles gave me his word,
When he sent me back from the ships, no mischief to do
Ere the twelfth morning should dawn, but from battle refrain.'
So spake he, and they to their wagons oxen and mules
Harness'd, and speedily flock'd to the gates of the town;
Nine days long did they build up a towering pyre,
On the tenth, when morning its light to mortals had brought,
Then straightway great-hearted Hector weeping they bore
And laid on the top of the pile, and set it on fire.
But soon as another dawn shone forth upon men,
Round glorious Hector's pyre were assembled the folk;
First they extinguish'd the burning with bright-hearted wine
Far as the strength of the fire in its onset had reach'd,
And then his brothers and comrades collected the bones,
Burn'd white in the flame, with wailing and many a tear.
Now these they took and enclos'd in a coffin of gold
With softest raiment of purple winding it round
And the coffin they laid in a hollow grave, and above
With close-set vaulting of great stones cover'd it in.
Then speedily heap'd they a barrow, with sentinels set
Lest the mail'd Achaeans should fall untimely on them,
And, the barrow rais'd, they return'd to the city, and there,
Gathering together, a noble burial feast
Held in the palace of Priam nurtur'd of Zeus.

So made they fun'ral for Hector, tamer of horses.

